

<b>Institution: Newcastle University</b>		
<b>Unit of Assessment: 6</b>		
<b>Title of case study: Increasing Equality for Women in Scottish Agriculture through policy change and investment</b>		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2016 - 2019</b>		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Professor Sally Shortall	Duke of Northumberland Professor of Rural Economy	2016 - present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2019 - 2020</b>		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N</b>		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b>		
<p>Research conducted at Newcastle University has advanced efforts to achieve gender equality between people working in the Scottish agricultural sector. Professor Sally Shortall's research into gendering in the agricultural sector caused the formation of a taskforce, whose recommendations changed Scottish governmental policy and inspired £1.7M of investment in a range of programmes for farmers and agricultural organisations. More than 1000 women have benefited from increased availability of, and participation in, professional development activities in the Scottish agricultural sector, which included business practice and leadership training, and investment funding. Sixteen agricultural organisations have benefitted from more inclusive practices with regard to gender. This is the first scheme of its kind to be implemented by a developed country.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b>		
<p>Research conducted by Prof Sally Shortall between 2016 and 2017 at Newcastle University established a baseline position on women in farming and the agriculture sector in Scotland. This was the first commissioned research on women in agriculture in Scotland and provided the evidence base for the Government to develop future policies.</p> <p>This research, commissioned by the Scottish Government's Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services Division [G1], investigated the role of women in farming and the agriculture sector in Scotland under five headings: daily life, aspirations, career paths, leadership and comparative analysis with women in other family businesses. Particular emphasis was placed on new entrant women farmers. Although not specified in the original tender, inheritance, training and farm safety emerged as important headings.</p> <p>Building on Prof Shortall's research expertise in this area, the research was comprised of literature review, 9 focus groups, 30 interviews and two on-line surveys: in total, over 1300 women and 12 men from across Scotland participated.</p> <p>In R1, the presence of gendered occupational enclosure in the Scottish agricultural sector is analysed, with potential mechanisms enforcing this state identified as not just structural exclusion including patrilineal inheritance and exclusion from farming organizations, but also symbolic interaction, non-verbal communication, exclusionary tactics and language. The research concludes that the process of removing these exclusionary mechanisms does and has occurred, but the rate of change in agriculture remains low because of processes of gendered structural and interactional social closure.</p>		

In R2, safety in farming practices and on farms is considered, with farm accidents identified as being a persistent social pattern requiring analysis of how families are socialised to interact with the farming space. Danger on farms is normalised, with implications for how children treat the space where families and farms intersect (a normalisation of danger results in children being socialised to undertake risky behaviour), and for the behaviour of women when they take on farming roles (women consciously undertake dangerous farming activities to prove that they are 'authentic' farmers).

R3 examines the rural as a gendered space with implications for policy, place-making and rural social relations, through a case study of (unconscious) gendered bias. These themes are examined through the lens of 'the farmyard', which as a working and social space has not been given the same consideration in planning policy and research. This has gendered implications because farms have evolved and are premised on the idea that farming relies on a masculine physique. An original example of unconscious gender bias in the social construction of the farmyard is provided, with a discussion of the different ways this is expressed.

As well as these findings, the wider research report established that:

- Women play a major role in Scottish agriculture, participating in the full range of farming activities.
- The most significant barrier women face is a cultural barrier rather than a legal one
- Women are very under-represented amongst the elected leadership of national-level farming organisations
- Some respondents reported exclusionary practices that take place in farming organisations
- There is a clear need for more access to vocational, practical training for women entering agriculture, across a range of topics.

This research, commissioned by the Scottish government and carried out by Prof Sally Shortall at Newcastle University, immediately upon completion formed the basis for the "Women in agriculture" taskforce, set up by The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon. Members of the Task Force were Ministerial appointments. The Task Force was gender equal and represented all key Scottish agricultural sectors. Prof Shortall was appointed to, and formed a key part of, this taskforce, providing scientific advice to the work of the taskforce and drafting the final report. This taskforce aimed to make policy recommendations a result of the Newcastle research. The taskforce reported in November 2019 in the document: "Women in agriculture Task Force: Final Report".

### 3. References to the research

#### Publications:

**R1:** Shortall S, McKee A, Sutherland L-A. The performance of occupational closure: The case of agriculture and gender. *Sociologia Ruralis* 2020. 60(1) 40-57. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soru.12279>  
*Contributes new knowledge to the processes by which occupational closure occurs*

**R2:** Shortall S, McKee A, Sutherland LA. Why do farm accidents persist? Normalising danger on the farm within the farm family. *Sociology of Health and Illness* 2019, 41(3), 470-483. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.12824>  
*Identifies how danger on farms is normalised.*

**R3:** Shortall S. Planning the farmyard: gendered implications. In: Scott, M, Gallent, N. and Gkartzios, M, ed. *The Routledge Companion to Rural Planning*. Oxford and New York: Routledge, 2019, pp.327-335. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315102375>  
*Shows for the first time how farmyard planning is gendered.*

#### Grants:

**G1:** Sally Shortall, Women in Farming and the Agricultural Sector - Scottish Gov Award (2016 – 2024) £40,000

#### 4. Details of the impact

Newcastle research has improved gender equality in Scottish agriculture [S1], by influencing the Scottish Programme for Government to invest £1.7M in enhancing the professional development of women in this sector, as well as a programme to change the culture around gender in agricultural organisations and the sector as a whole. This investment was as a result of a taskforce which arose directly from Prof Shortall's research [S2]. So far this scheme has trained >1000 women, nearly 10% of women working in agriculture in Scotland, and is the first scheme to investigate, and implement practical steps to resolve, gender equality in the agricultural sector in a developed nation [S3].

This impact was made possible by the direct setting up of the Women in Scottish Agriculture Taskforce by the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, in 2017. This policy impact reflects the importance of the research carried out by Prof Sally Shortall at Newcastle University, and was enacted to implement the recommendations made in the research [S1]. This research was described by Fergus Ewing MSP as: "...a significant piece of work which the Scottish Government and the First Minister are committed to progressing to ensure fairer equality in the future for women in agriculture." [S2]

Prof Shortall was a key member of this taskforce, providing specialist scientific advice [S3]. The Taskforce recommended the implementation of all 27 of Prof Shortall's recommendations in 2018, which were immediately taken up and funded in the Scottish Programme for Government as, according to Nicola Sturgeon, they "bring forward practical solutions to enable Scottish agriculture to start breaking down the barriers faced by women and to inspire them to reach their full potential". [S3; S4]. As a result of the work of the Women in Agriculture Taskforce, the Programme for Government included a commitment for £200K for 2019/2020. On the 28 November 2019, Mr Ewing announced £300k pa for 2020 – 2024 to implement improvements for women in agriculture, also included in the Programme for Government [S4, S5].

A key measure enacted by the Scottish Government include the Women in Agriculture Development Programme, which was delivered via the Be Your Best Self (BYBS), Knowing Your Business, and Leadership Development courses. Including the pilot in 2018, more than 1000 women have been trained as part of this programme, despite COVID-19 related interruptions to planned events in 2020 [S6]. The impact on these women has been extensive; feedback from the training programmes indicates that participants rated the programme overwhelmingly as "Excellent". According to one participant at the BYBS course: "I was able to recognise my fears and worries but also think about how to improve on how I act towards them. The drama triangle and mindset aspects I feel will help me deal with aspects of my life I hadn't dealt with." Aspects of the course that were particularly valued include "Understanding more about psychology of how our minds work and how we can influence that and make positive changes. Giving the ability and confidence to then go on and do what you want with confidence. Knowing how to cope with difficult situations" [S7]. Ten months on from the BYBS training, all women are still actively engaged and meeting regularly, showing the ongoing effect of the programme [S8].

The outcome of this programme of training is a cohort of women having gained the ability to further develop their businesses or take up leadership roles in Scottish agriculture. The programme removes barriers to success identified by women themselves in the Research Report [S1], and has advanced equality for women within the agricultural industry. This was confirmed by the Equality Impact Assessment conducted by the Scottish government on the Women in Agriculture Development Programme, which showed that the programme has had "a large impact on women, particularly those women in rural communities" and "an impact on everyone in agriculture, from those in farming families and crofting communities to those in larger agricultural businesses and organisations" [S9]. The EIA also identifies that the programme has achieved a "positive impact on [agricultural businesses and organisations] in terms of business development and profitability" [S9].

As well as providing women with the skills to succeed in agriculture, the Taskforce has also delivered activities which have improved equality in the agricultural sector as a whole, leading to an industry which is "more inclusive, with fairer representation, which as a result is more economically resilient and more productive" [S3]. Whilst many activities were hampered by

COVID (see COVID impact statement), several activities with 16 organisations were still completed. Unconscious Bias Training has been delivered in 6 organisations from across the spectrum of the Scottish agricultural sector [S6; S8]. As a result, organisations involved are now carrying out “positive actions to support diversity” following the training [S8]. The Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution have committed to take on more female board members and young people and to launch a young persons’ board training programme 2021 [S8]. The Crofting Commission Board has set up a working group to address gender inequality and taken action to encourage more women to attend and observe their meetings through an open invitation [S8]. Feedback from the programme indicates a profound impact on participants, who reported that “The materials really made me question my own bias” and “Before enrolling for this training I had considered the benefits of diversity but not unconscious bias. The pre-work IAT were certainly an eye opener for me and did not give me the results that I had expected.” [S8].

An Equality Charter for Scottish Agriculture was developed by the Task Force which supports businesses and organisations to become more supportive and inclusive, leading to greater business efficiencies [S6]. The first phase of the pilot of the Equality Charter for Scottish Agriculture has been completed with 10 businesses and organisations. These organisations have benefited from a platform to support their commitment to achieving gender equality, and data collected from the pilot will inform later iterations of the scheme, expanding to all agribusinesses and ensuring it works for all types and sizes of organisation [S8].

Further evidence of the success of the Taskforce was in its winning of the Anna Murray Partnership Working Award from Lantra Scotland, one of the leading awarding bodies for land-based industries in the UK and Ireland [S10].

Beyond Scotland, the Irish Farmers Association (IFA) developed their “Diversity Strategy: Toward 2025” on the basis of Shortall’s research for the Scottish Government. The IFA’s Farm Family & Social Affairs Executive, Geraldine O’Sullivan, confirms that the work in Scotland was: “was hugely valuable to the work of the IFA Diversity Committee..[as they]..start the journey of increasing the gender diversity within the Association.” [S10].

## 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

**S1:** Women in farming and the agriculture sector: research report. *Output of the research by Prof Sally Shortall which inspired the taskforce formation*

**S2:** Letter from Fergus Ewing MSP, Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity in 2017, thanking Prof Shortall for the excellent research which led to the Taskforce formation. *Shows Prof Shortall’s involvement with Scottish government officials and the Taskforce.*

**S3:** Women in Agriculture Taskforce: final report. *Shows the measures taken up as a result of Prof Shortall’s research.*

**S4:** Programme for Scotland 2019. *Shows commitment to fund Women in Agriculture Taskforce.*

**S5:** Statements from Sara Thorpe, Policy Officer in the Agricultural Policy Division of the Scottish government. *Confirms the 2020/21 spend of WIA funds*

**S6:** Letter from Joyce Campbell, co-chair of the taskforce. *Confirms training numbers and activities to end of December 2020.*

**S7:** Example feedback from the Be Your Best Self pilot. *Shows the positive impact of the course on the attendees.*

**S8:** Progress update on Women in Agriculture Final report Recommendations – Jan 2nd 2021, and slide with Unconscious Bias feedback. *Details progress to date towards the final recommendations.*

**S9:** The Equality Impact Assessment conducted by the Scottish Government in 2020 on the

**Impact case study (REF3)**

Women in Agriculture Development Programme.

*Analysis shows the positive impact of the programme on the trainees, and the agricultural sector.*

**S10:** Other evidence of impact: Cached version of the Lantra Awards 2020, available from:

<https://www.lantra.co.uk/news/winners-lantra-scotlands-prestigious-albas-announced>; and email from Geraldine O'Sullivan, Irish Farmer's Association (IFA) Farm Family & Social Affairs Executive

*Lists the Taskforce as winners of the Anna Murray Partnership Working Award; and confirms the importance of the WIA to the IFA's Diversity committee.*