

FAMILY FARMING: A MAGNETIC APPROACH FOR AGROECOLOGY

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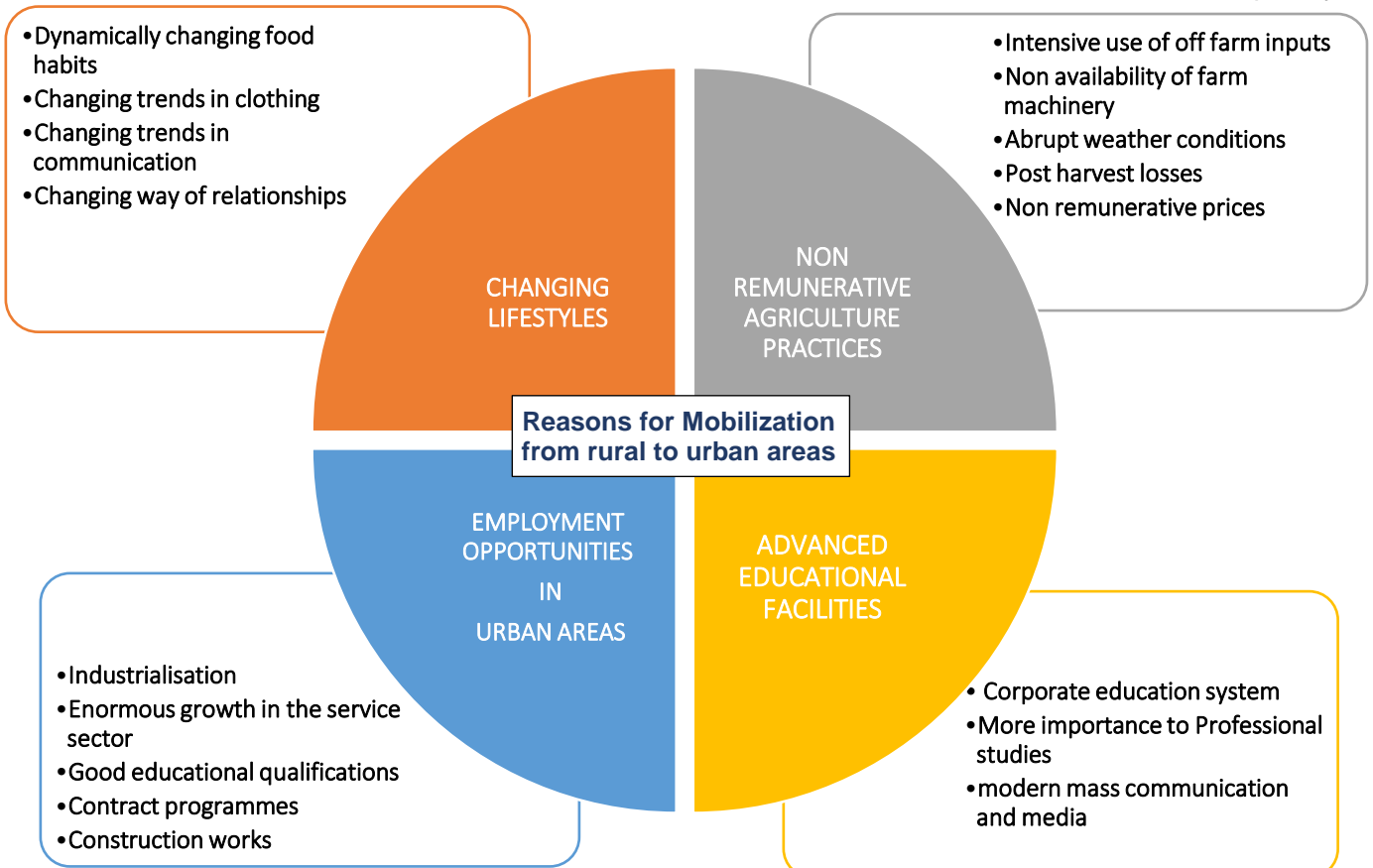
In ancient India every family in a village was an individual unit of production by cultivating staple food crops, managing livestock and was self-sufficient with nutritious foods required for family members and the surplus was marketed in the local markets. The joint family culture

in those days helped them to practice agriculture along with the cattle by large section of the rural people. On the other side, the sheep and goats were reared by the resource-poor people in the villages. Diversified practices viz., application of farm yard manure and sheep and goat manure to the crops helped in the enrichment of soil health, pest and disease control by natural agents, recycling the agriculture waste as feed to the cattle, dairy products from the cattle, protein-rich source products from backyard poultry, vegetables and fruits from nutritional gardening in the backyards created the ambient atmosphere of a family in the villages in the olden days. This ambient atmosphere helped to maintain not only the agroecology system but also the traditions and culture of the gigantic nation.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defined the family farm as “An agricultural holding which is managed and operated by a household and where farm

labour is largely supplied by that household”. Further, they said that Family farms are by far the most common type of farm encompassing a wide range of agricultural holdings from small, semi-subsistence farms with only family workers and farms which have to rely on other gainful activities for a diversified source of income, through to much larger, more productive farms which nevertheless are mostly managed by family members (Anonymous, 2019).

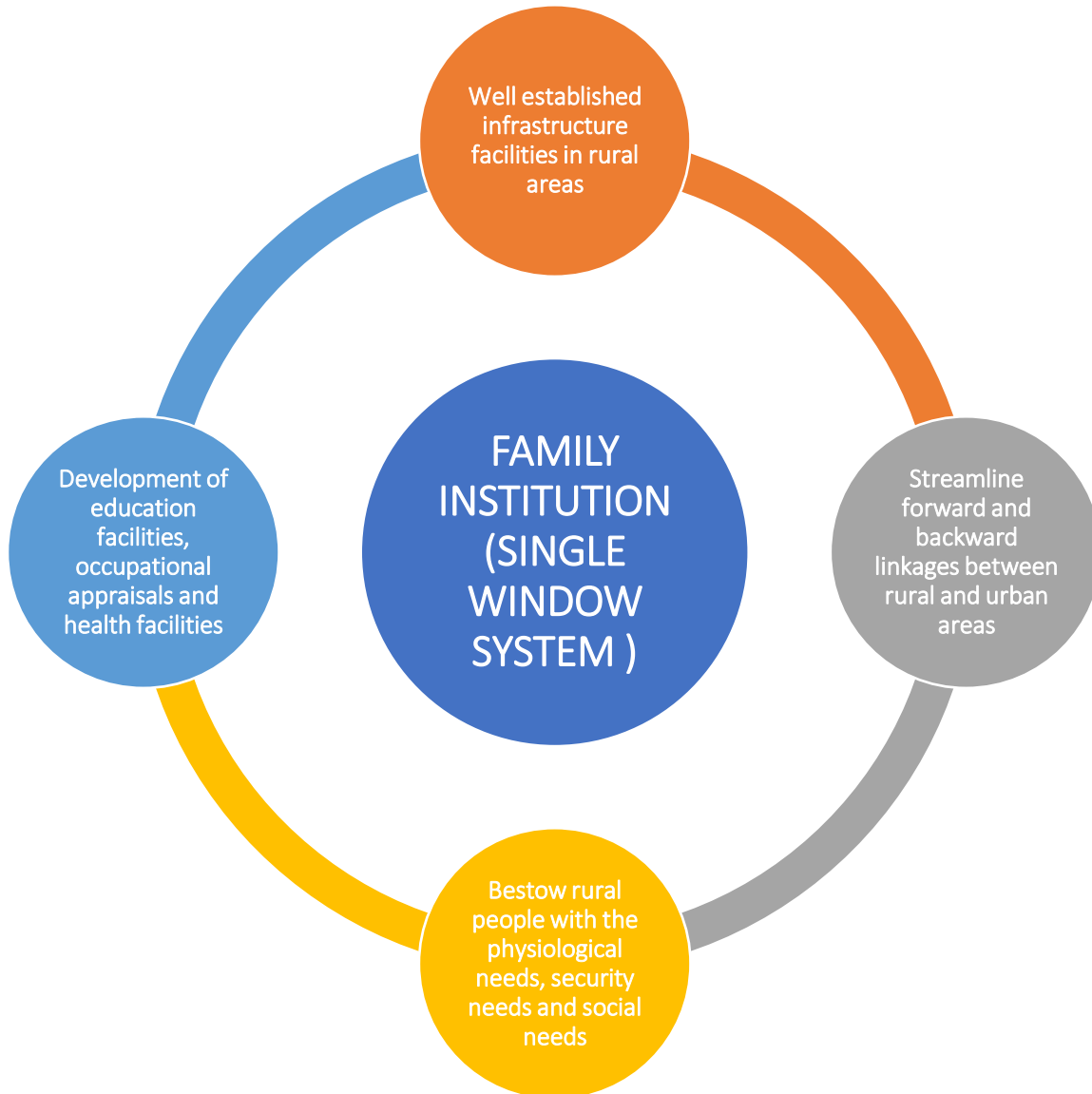
The changing lifestyles and the non-remunerative agriculture, advanced education and employment facilities led to drastic changes in the farming patterns in the villages and broke down the joint family system into nuclear families. This gave rise to the split up of large land holdings into small and marginal land holdings which resulted in more small and marginal farmers in the country. Due to increased rate of pollution, uncertain climatic conditions agriculture ecology has been disturbed completely



leading to less profits and poor income levels of farming community. The United Nations declared 2019-2028 as the

health of the soil thereby maintaining soil fertility, family farmers are considered as the agents of change we need to

farming system. If this situation is continued then there would be no human being in the villages in the coming decades. As quoted



Decade of Family farming. This has been done with a view that family farming aims to throw new light on what it means to be a family farmer in a rapidly changing world and highlights more than ever before the important role they play in eradicating hunger and shaping our future towards food security. Family farming offers a unique opportunity to ensure food security, improve livelihoods, better manage natural resources, protect the environment and achieve sustainable development, particularly in rural areas. The communities of family farming particularly emphasise on the

Forward and backward linkages between rural and urban areas

achieve for Zero Hunger, a more balanced and resilient planet, and the Sustainable Development Goals. Family farms occupy around 70-80% of the farmland worldwide and produce more than 80 % of the food in the world and 90% of the fishery is operated by family farms.

The resource-poor farmers migrated from rural areas to urban areas in search of hectic and laborious employment opportunities in the urban areas leaving the villages abandoned. Thus, disintegrating the family

by Mahatma Gandhi “The future of the nation lies in its villages”, to see the future it is our responsibility to protect our villages from disintegration which is possible through mobilizing the integrated farming system approach by each family residing in the villages. The policymakers must come forward to implement innovative strategies to regain the village structure and agroecology prevailed in those days. Different capacity-building activities must be taken up to upgrade the stakeholders involved in the entire farming system through a systematic approach. The family institution at the village level must become the single window

system for all the food products required by human beings of all ages. To rejuvenate the family farming system primarily the infrastructure facilities at the villages must be improved to a large extent because even today many hamlets and village gram panchayats don't have all weathered roads, shortage of electricity, lack of proper communication facilities, poor access to different multimedia and social networking even in this so-called digital world. Secondly the linkages between the rural and urban amenities must be enhanced and interdependence of both rural and urban areas must be designed sophisticatedly. The forward and backward linkages between rural and urban areas must be streamlined so that the people living in both areas get benefits. If the people in the rural areas are bestowed with the physiological needs, security needs and social needs that are essential for them, then they never try to migrate to the urban areas. UN decade of family farming 2019-2028, has highlighted many key issues viz., Zero Hunger, a more balanced and resilient planet, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (Anonymous, 2019). Another advantage of family farming is that, they can blend traditional agricultural practices with technical know-how thereby can promote the food systems with are more resilient to climate change, which is one of the burning issues in the present scenario.

Conclusion

In this line, given the importance of family farming, the local self-government personnel, and department officials must contribute to the development of education facilities, occupational appraisals and health facilities available at present to the satisfactory level of rural people. The smart world and digital world can boost the agroecology

system optimistically in the villages by using advanced technologies to fasten the rejuvenation of the family farming system. Further, youth is the future of family farming, because young farmers are the Bridgestone between traditional local knowledge and innovative ideas. In this context, we strongly recommend that family farming is the only system which protects indigenous technology and can make food systems more sustainable.

References

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