

VIDYA BHAWAN BALIKA VIDYA PITH

शक्तिउत्थानआश्रमलखीसरायबिहार

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RURAL DEVELOPMENT

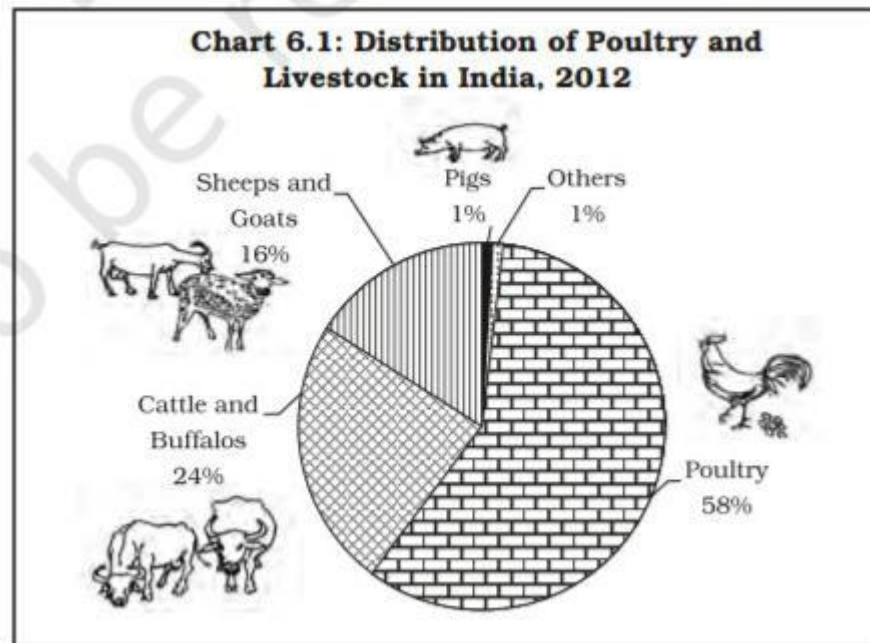
Emerging Alternate Marketing Channels: It has been realised that if farmers directly sell their produce to consumers, it increases their incomes. Some examples of these channels are Apni Mandi (Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan); Hadaspar Mandi (Pune); Rythu Bazars (vegetable and fruit markets in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and Uzhavar Sandies (farmers markets in Tamil Nadu). Further, several national and multinational fast food chains are increasingly entering into contracts/ alliances with farmers to encourage them to cultivate farm products (vegetables, fruits, etc.) of the desired quality by providing them with not only seeds and other inputs but also assured procurement of the produce at pre- decided prices. It is argued that such arrangements will help in reducing the price risks of farmers and would also expand the markets for farm products. Do you think such arrangements raise incomes of small farmers.

DIVERSIFICATION INTO PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Diversification includes two aspects - one relates to change in cropping pattern and the other relates to a shift of workforce from agriculture to other allied activities (livestock, poultry, fisheries etc.) and non-agriculture sector. The need for diversification arises from the fact that there is greater risk in depending exclusively on farming for livelihood. Diversification towards new areas is necessary not only to reduce the risk from agriculture sector but also to provide productive sustainable livelihood options to rural people. Much of the agricultural employment activities are concentrated in the Kharif season. But during the Rabi season, in areas where there are inadequate irrigation facilities, it becomes difficult to find gainful employment. Therefore expansion into other sectors is essential to provide supplementary gainful employment and in realising higher levels of income for rural people to overcome poverty and other tribulations. Hence, there is a need to focus on allied activities, non-farm employment and other emerging alternatives of livelihood, though there are many other options available for providing sustainable livelihoods in rural areas.

As agriculture is already overcrowded, a major proportion of the increasing labour force needs to find alternate employment opportunities in other non-farm sectors. Non-farm economy has several segments in it; some possess dynamic linkages that permit healthy growth while others are in subsistence, low productivity propositions. The dynamic sub-sectors include agro-processing industries, food processing industries, leather industry, tourism, etc. Those sectors which have the potential but seriously lack infrastructure and other support include traditional

home-based industries like pottery, crafts, handlooms etc. Majority of rural women find employment in agriculture while men generally look for non-farm employment. In recent times, women have also begun looking for non-farm jobs (see Box 6.2).



Box 6.2: Tamil Nadu Women in Agriculture (TANWA)

Tamil Nadu Women in Agriculture (TANWA) is a project initiated in Tamil Nadu to train women in latest agricultural techniques. It induces women to actively participate in raising agricultural productivity and family income. At a Farm Women's Group in Thiruchirapalli, run by Anthoniammal, trained women are successfully making and selling vermicompost and earning money from this venture. Many other Farm Women's Groups are creating savings in their group by functioning like mini banks through a micro-credit system. With the accumulated savings, they promote small-scale household activities like mushroom cultivation, soap manufacture, doll making or other income-generating activities.