

# **State of Indian Farmers: A Report**

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## **Acknowledgements**

The survey was designed and analyzed by a team of researchers at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi. The team included Anuradha Singh, Ashish Ranjan, Banasmita Bora, Dhananjai Kumar Singh, Himanshu Bhattacharya, K.A.Q.A Hilal, Jyoti Mishra, Nitin Mehta, Rahul Verma, Rajnish Kumar, Sameedh Sharma, Shreyas Sardesai and Vibha Attri.

Sanjay Kumar directed this all India survey. Suhas Palshikar and Sandeep Shastri provided their suggestions during the entire exercise. The fieldwork of this survey was coordinated by scholars from the Lokniti Network: E Venkatesu (Andhra Pradesh), Subhrajeet Konwar (Assam), Rakesh Ranjan (Bihar), Anupama Saxena and Shamshad Ansari (Chhattisgarh), Bhanu Parmar (Gujarat), Kushal Pal (Haryana), Ramesh Chauhan (Himachal Pradesh), Harishwar Dayal (Jharkhand), Sandeep Shastri, Veena Devi and Reetika Syal (Karnataka), Sajad Ibrahim (Kerala), Yatindra Singh Sisodia (Madhya Pradesh), Nitin Birmal (Maharashtra), Anil Kumar Mohapatra (Orissa), Jagroop Singh Sekhon (Punjab), Sanjay Lodha (Rajasthan), P Ramajayam (Tamil Nadu), A.K. Verma, Asmer Beg, and Sudhir Kumar (Uttar Pradesh), Suprio Basu (West Bengal).

## Method Note

The present study is based on primary survey across 18 states of India by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi conducted between December 2013 and January 2014. The survey was conducted in 274 villages spread over 137 district of the country. Figure 1 depicts the geographical distribution of sampled population.

The survey was conducted using a multi-level sampling technique. Figure 2 represents the stages of sampling used in this study. We first excluded the urban areas and then sampled the districts. Within each district two tehsils/blocks/talukas were selected using systematic random sampling technique. We then selected 274 Villages using simple random technique after excluding all the villages that had less than 150 households as per Census of India 2001. Finally, 30 households were randomly selected from each sampled village using the updated electoral rolls. If the number of polling station in a village was more than three or more, in that case two polling stations were selected (both polling stations were given equal weight while drawing the samples).

A total of 8220 randomly selected electors were approached for household interviews of which 5350 interviews were successfully completed. Table 1 shows the spread of achieved sample of this study. Women respondents comprise 16.7 per cent, Scheduled Castes 19.8 per cent, Scheduled Tribes 11.9 per cent, and OBCs 40.3 per cent of the sample household. Non-Hindu constitutes 13.5 per cent of the sample household.

The interview was conducted face to face at the place of residence of the respondent, using a standard structured questionnaire in the language spoken and understood by the respondent.. To understand the view of youth and females, we designed a separate structured questionnaire for youth and female respondents of the household. We interviewed 2114 youth and 4298 females. Table 2 shows the samples across five regions.

**North Zone** - Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Utter Pradesh

**South Zone** - Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala

**East Zone** - Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa

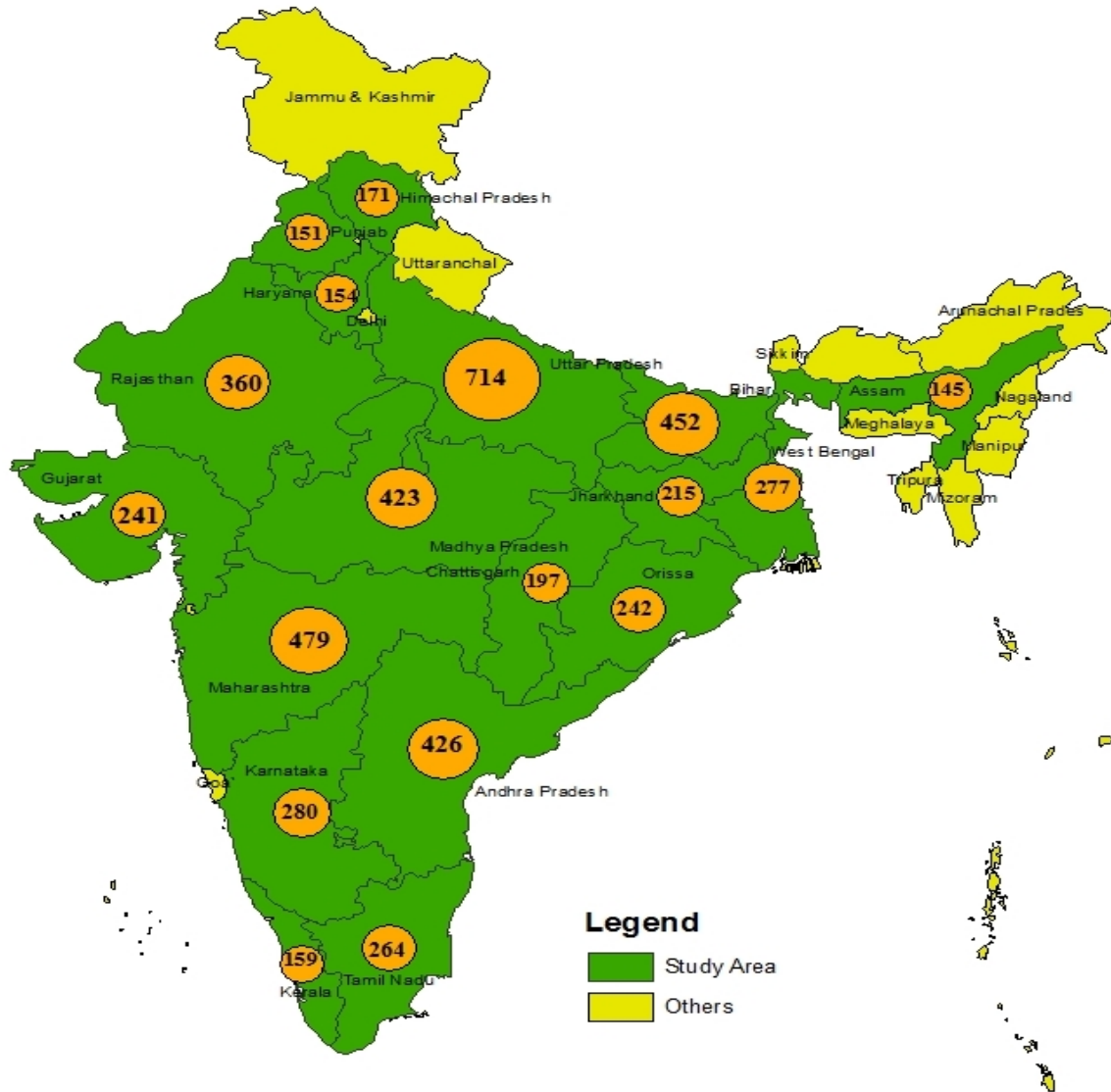
**Central Zone** - Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh

**West Zone** - Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra

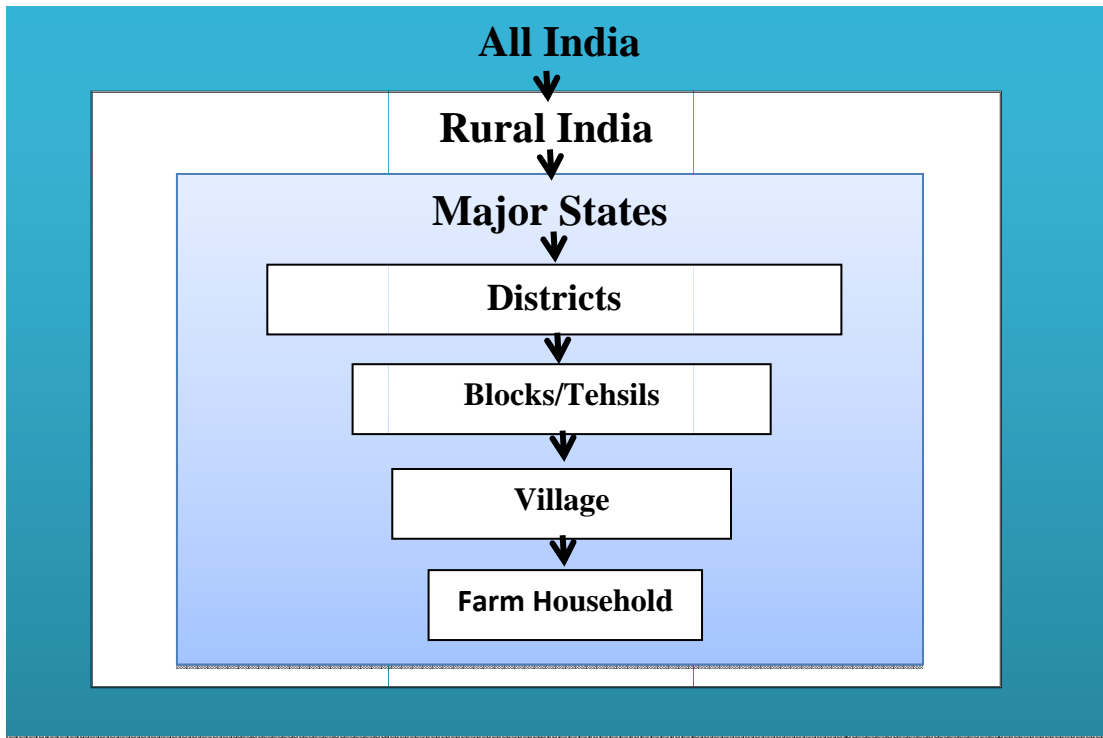
Similarly, while analyzing the data we created a variable on the basis of land ownership. A household that has more than 10 acres of land is a Large Farmer; between 4 acre and 9.99 is a Medium Farmer; less than four acres as a Small/Marginal Farmer; and with no land as Landless Farmer. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the sample by land ownership category.

Figure 1: Geographical Distribution of Selected Samples

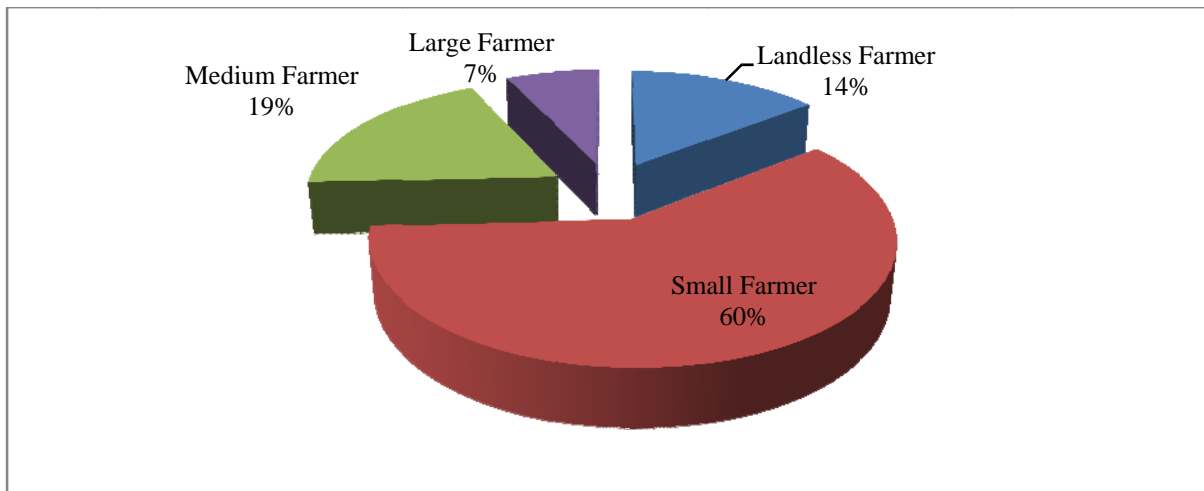
### Sample Distribution of Farmer Households



**Figure 2: Multi-level Sampling for Selection of Farm Household**



**Figure 3: Distribution of sample by land ownership**



**Table 1: Distribution of Total Sample across States**

Sr no	State	Surveyed Household	District	Tehsil/ Village	No of Agricultural Workers (in Million)*
1	Uttar Pradesh	714	19	38	37.4
2	Maharashtra	479	13	26	24.9
3	Bihar	452	12	24	24.8
4	Andhra Pradesh	426	11	22	22.4
5	Madhya Pradesh	423	11	22	21.2
6	Rajasthan	360	9	18	18.1
7	West Bengal	277	7	14	14.8
8	Karnataka	280	7	14	13.1
9	Tamil Nadu	264	6	12	12.3
10	Gujarat	241	6	12	11.7
11	Odisha	242	6	12	10.6
12	Chhattisgarh	197	5	10	8.8
13	Jharkhand	215	5	10	8.1
14	Assam	145	4	8	5.8
15	Haryana	154	4	8	3.8
16	Punjab	151	4	8	3.3
17	Kerala	159	4	8	1.7
18	Himachal Pradesh	171	4	8	2.2
	<b>All India</b>	5350	137	274	248.7

\* Source: Primary Census Abstract, 2011

**Table 2: Distribution of Sample across Geographical Regions**

	Household	Youth	Female
North	1190	633	1026
East	1116	277	946
Central	835	432	731
South	1129	399	756
West	1080	375	839
<b>All India</b>	5350	2116	4298

## Section 1

### Indian Farmer: A Socio-Economic Profile

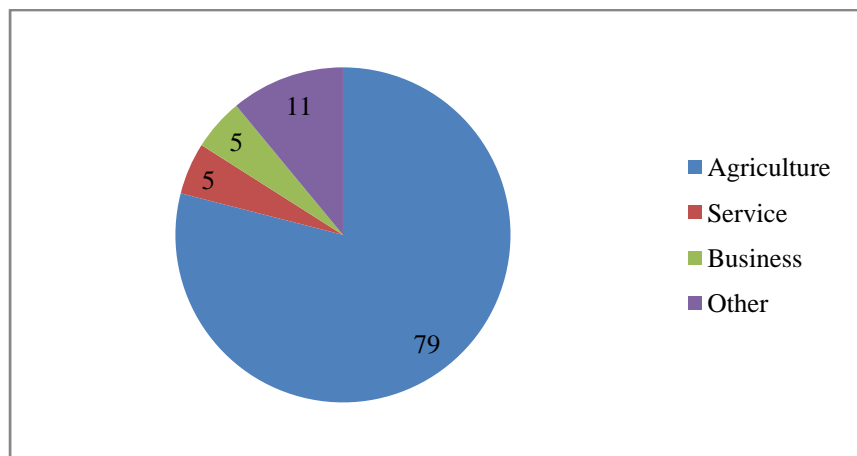
The comprehensive and widespread survey conducted by CSDS on the state of Indian farmers offers some interesting insights with respect to their socio-economic background.

- 36 per cent farmers live either in a hut or a kuchha house. 44 per cent live in a kutchapucca or mixed house. Only 18 per cent of them have a pucca independent house.
- 28 per cent of the farmers were found to be non-literate. 14 per cent have passed matric (Class X), and only 6 per cent entered for a college degree.
- Overall 83 per cent of the farmers consider agriculture to be their main occupation (varies from 62 per cent in Tamil Nadu to 98 per cent in Gujarat).
- 32 per cent of the farmers do work other than farming for additional household income.
- In past one year approximately one in every ten farmers said that their family had to remain without food on few occasions.
- Most farmer households (61 per cent) have two meals a day. Only 2 per cent have one meal a day and 34 per cent eat more than two times a day.
- Only 44 per cent farmers eat all three meals a day, whereas 39 per cent of the surveyed farmers said that they eat lunch and dinner only.
- 65 per cent farmers said that other members from the family also helped in activities related to farming.
- 75 per cent of the farmers said they are engaged in farming for more than ten years.
- Only 10 per cent of the farmers are members of a farmer organization.
- 86 per cent of the farmers or their family owns land.
- 14 per cent of the farmers who took part in the survey were found to be landless or without any land of their own. 60 per cent are small farmers (those who own 1-3 acres of land), 19 per cent fall in the category of medium farmers (own 4-9 acres of land) and 7 per cent are large farmers (own 10 or more acres of land).

### **Main source of income for the farmer**

As mentioned earlier, overall 83 per cent of the farmers interviewed consider agriculture to be their main occupation. Moreover, 79 per cent said that agriculture is the main source of income of their household. For others a large part of their household's income came from non-agricultural works (Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1: Main source of income of the farmer household**



Note: All the figures are in percentage; N=5294.

Question asked: What is the main source of income in your household?

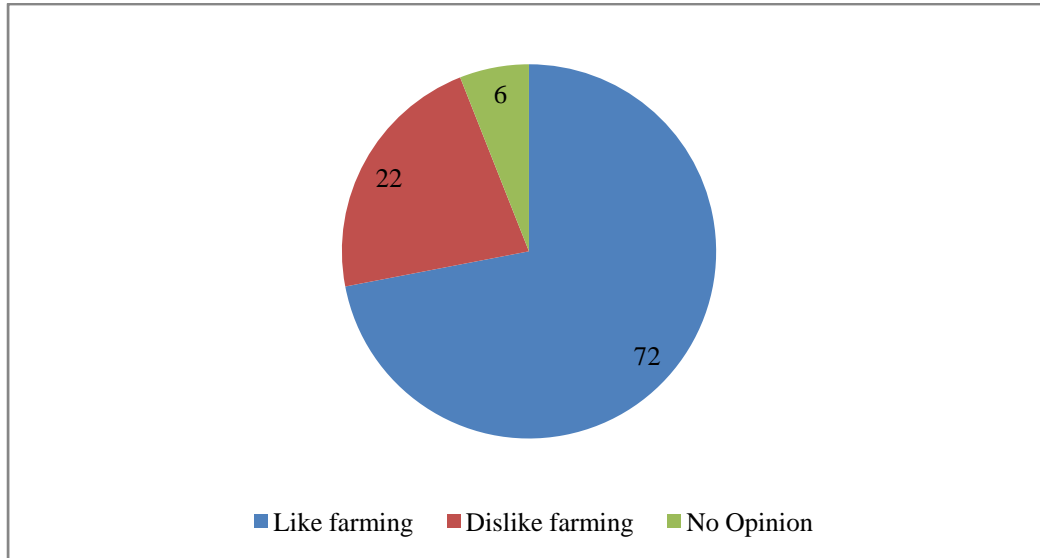
The survey also reveals that 90 per cent of the farmers are doing farming because it is their ancestral occupation, while only 10 per cent are new farmers who have joined farming in recent years.

### **Interest in farming**

The NSS 59th round on the Situation Assessment Survey of Farmers, 2003 had revealed that at the all-India level, 60% of farmer households reported that they liked farming as a profession. The remaining 40% were of the opinion that, given a choice, they would take up some other career. The CSDS survey in 18 states has similar findings. The survey found that nearly three-fourths of farmers like their profession. When asked whether they like farming or not, 72 per cent of the farmers answered in the affirmative while 22 per cent farmers said they do not like doing farming (Figure 1.2). A regional analysis of the question indicates 84 per cent of the farmers in central India like farming while in North and East India the figures are much lower at 67 and 69 per cent respectively.



**Figure 1.2: Interest in farming**

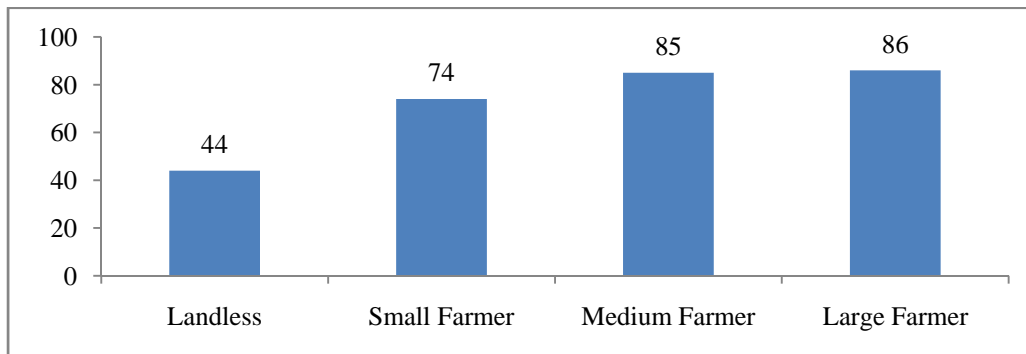


Note: All the figures are in percentage

Question asked: Do you like farming?

Interest in farming is also influenced by the social class of the farmers. Landless farmers show least interest/likeness towards farming and the figure of likeness rises gradually as we move from landless to large farmers who seem to like farming the most (Figure 1.3)

**Figure 1.3: Interest in farming on the basis of Social class of the farmers**

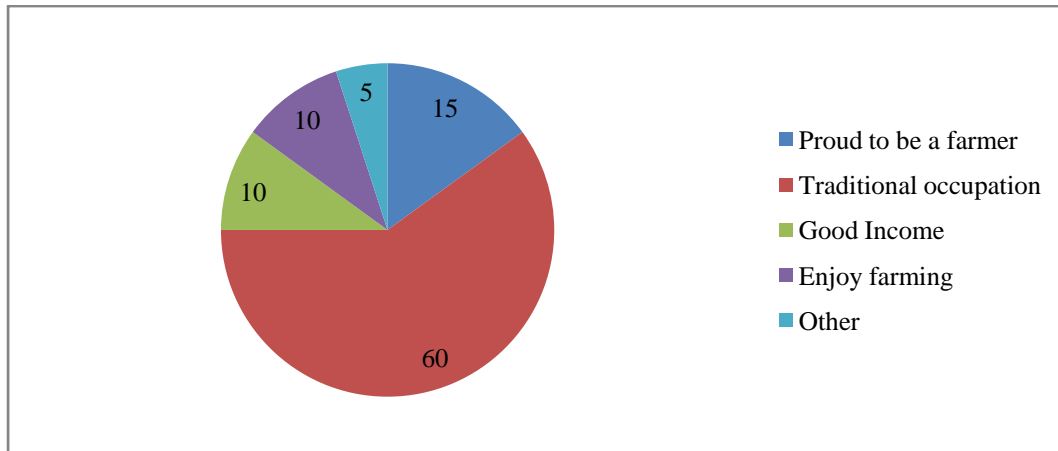


Note: All the figures are in percentage

Question asked: Do you like farming?

What are their reasons for liking farming as an occupation? Among those who said they like farming, 60 per cent like it as it is their ancestral occupation, 15 per cent feel a sense of pride in being a farmer, while 10 per cent said that they like farming as it gives them a good income. Another 10 per cent said they just simply enjoy doing farming (Figure 1.4).

**Figure 1.4: Reasons for liking farming**

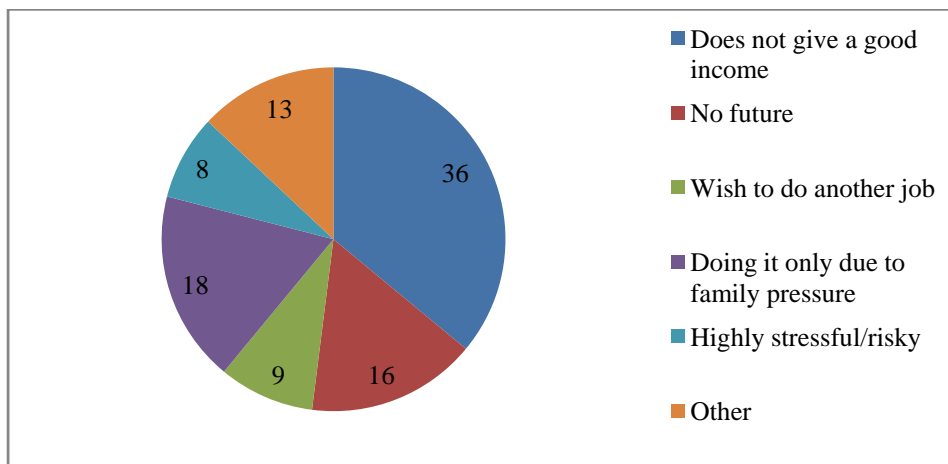


Note: All the figures are in percentage; only among those who liked farming.

Question asked: Could you tell me the main reason for liking farming?

What are the reasons of the 22 per cent who dislike farming? Lack of a good income is the main reason for their dislike of farming. 36 per cent of the farmers cited this as the reason. 18 per cent of those who dislike farming said they are doing it only because of family pressure. 16 per cent say that they see no future in this sector. 9 per cent said that they wish to do another job, while 8 per cent consider farming stressful or risky and hence do not like doing it (Figure 1.5).

**Figure 1.5: Reasons for disliking farming**



Note: All the figures are in percentage; only for those who disliked farming.

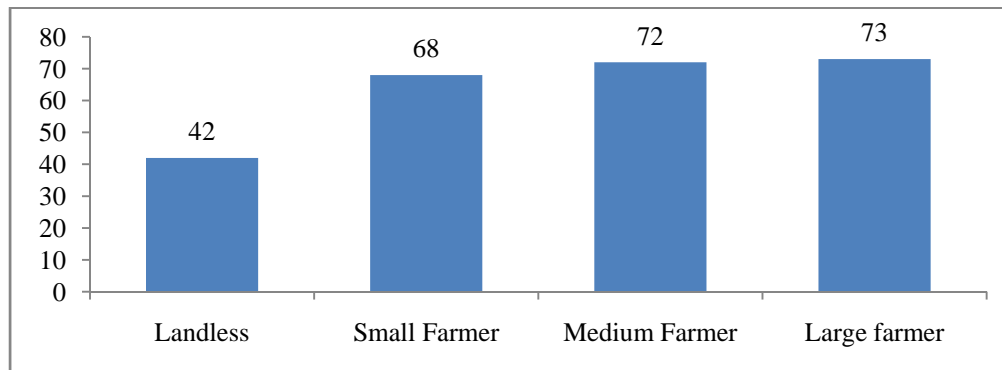
Question asked: Could you tell me the main reason for disliking farming?

### **Participation of Other Family Members in Farming**

Over two-thirds (66 per cent) of the farmers said that women from their household are also engaged in farming. Among large farmers the figure was much higher at 73 per cent. Among

landless farmers it was quite low at 42 per cent (Figure 1.6). Interestingly, one-fifth of all the farmers interviewed said that school going children from their household are also involved in farming.

**Figure 1.6: Participation of women from farmer households in farming**



Note: All the figures are in percentage; the rest said that women of their household do not take part in farming  
Question asked: Are the following members of your household involved in farming? A. Women, B. School going children

### **Opinion of Women and Youth from Farmer Households**

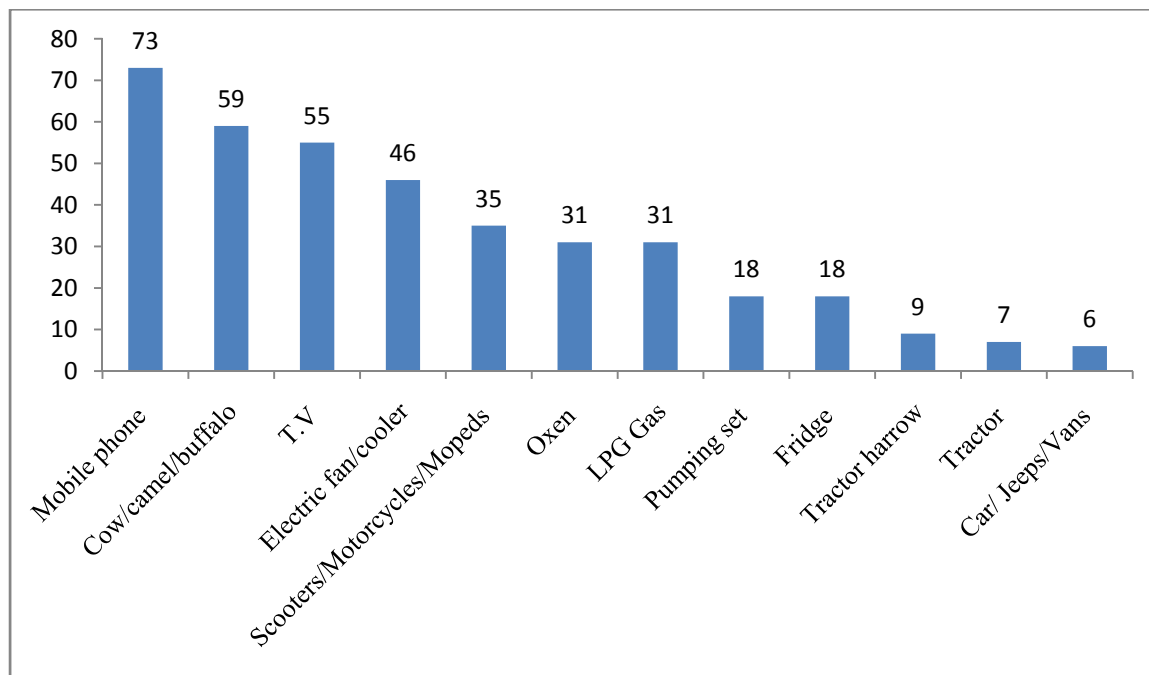
Apart from interviewing the farmers, the survey investigators also interviewed (wherever it was possible) one female and one young member of the respondents household on the issue of farming. Here are some of the key findings from what they had to say –

- As mentioned above, 66 per cent of the women belonging to farmer households are involved in farming.
- 18 per cent women of the farmer households do other non-farming work to contribute financially to the family income.
- 67 per cent women say that the income from agriculture is not sufficient to fulfill the livelihood needs of their family. Only 20 per cent found it to be sufficient.
- 43 per cent women believe that if the main earner of their family would have been doing some other work rather than agriculture, their quality of life would have been better.
- 21 per cent women belonging to farmer households said that price rice was the biggest problem being faced by their household and 13 per cent said poverty is their biggest problem.
- 63 per cent youth belonging to farmer households help the family in farming.
- Only 24 per cent youth belonging to farmer households are interested in continuing farming while 76 per cent would prefer to do some other work rather than farming.
- Among the youth who are interested in continuing farming, most said it is their traditional occupation and they wanted to take it forward.

## Economic Profile of Indian Farmers

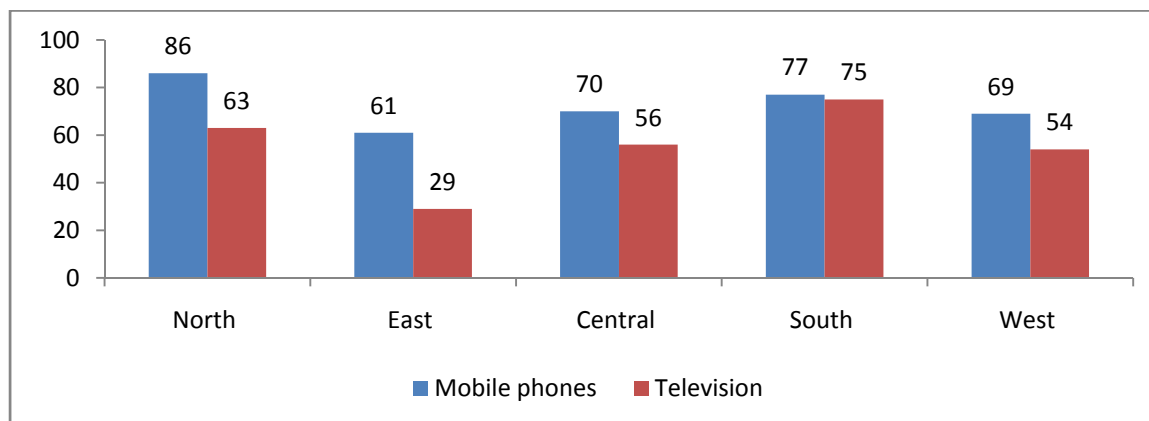
In terms of assets, seven out of ten farmers said they have a mobile phone and more than one in two farmer households have a TV (Figure 1.7). Proportion of farmers with mobile phones and TV sets was found to be lowest in the Eastern part of the country. North India has the highest penetration of mobile phones whereas South India has the highest proportion of TV owning farmer households (Figure 1.8)

**Figure 1.7: Assets owned by farmers**



Note: All figures in percentage; the rest do not have these assets.

**Figure 1.8: Penetration of mobile phones and TV among farmers by Region**



Note: All figures in percentage; only among those who own mobile phones and TV.

Nearly three fourths of Indian farmers according to the survey have a bank account or a post-office account. However the penetration of the Aadhar card among farmers is much less at 50 per cent (Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1: Proportion of farmers with bank/post office accounts & Aadhar card**

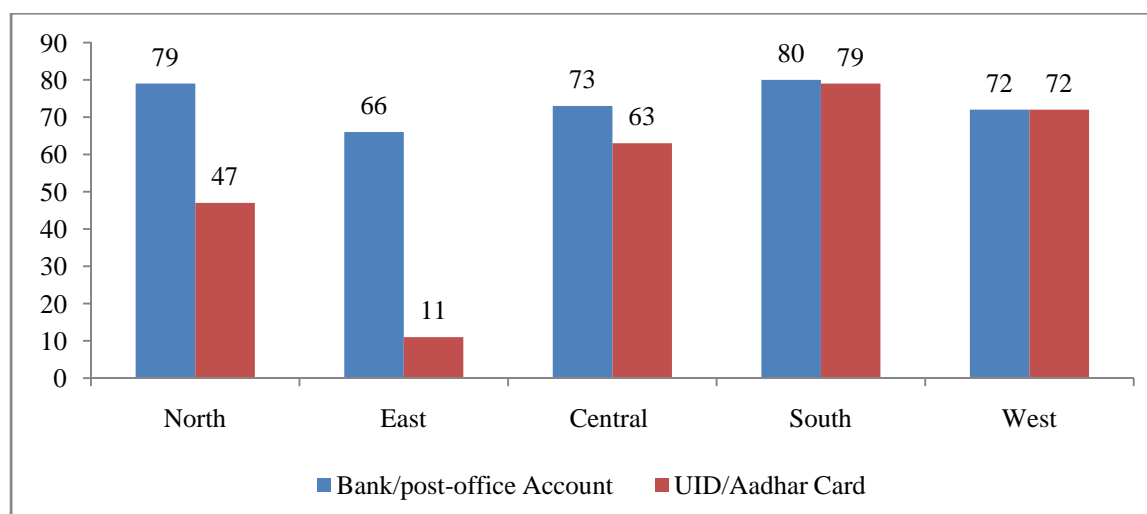
Farmers who have...	Per cent
Bank/Post-office account	74
UID/Aadhar card	50

Note: The rest of the respondents did not have a bank/post office account or an Aadhar card

Question asked: Do you or members of your household have the following - bank/post office account, UID/Aadhar card

Figure 1.9 shows that South and North India have the highest proportion of farmers who have a bank or post office account followed by the Central and Western part of the country. Of all the regions, the proportion of farmers with a bank account is lowest in Eastern India. As far as the Aadhar card is concerned, its penetration is highest in Southern India followed by Western and Central India. Only about half the farmers in North India said they have an Aadhar card. In the Eastern part of the country, only one in ten farmers reported to have an Aadhar card.

**Figure 1.9: Proportion of farmers with bank/post office accounts & Aadhar card by Region**



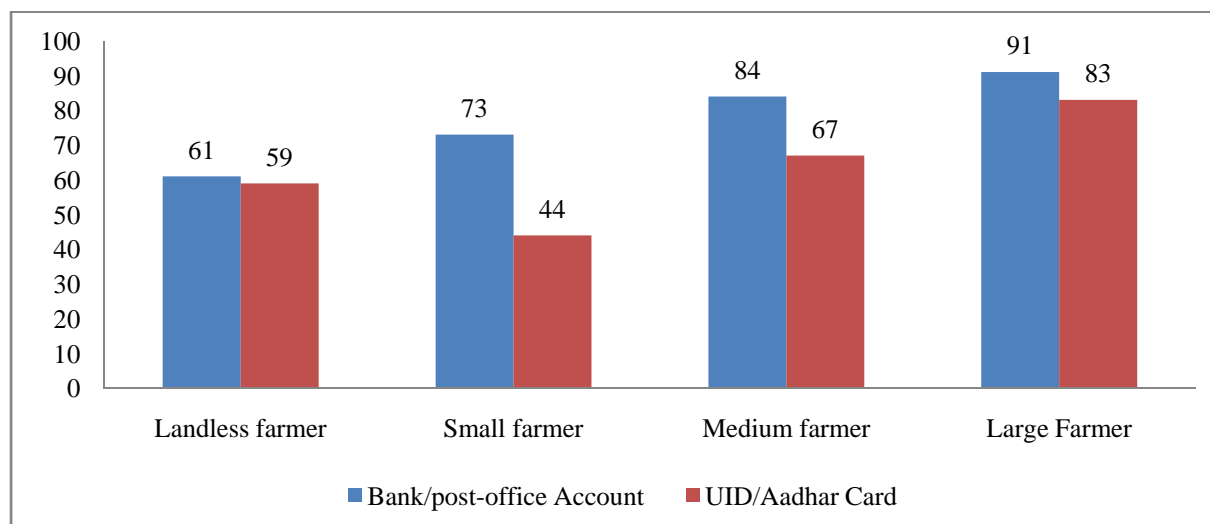
Note: All figures are in percentage; the rest did not have a bank account or an Aadhar card

Question asked: Do you or members of your household have the following - bank/post office account, UID/Aadhar card

If we look at the penetration of bank accounts among farmers in terms of their social class, 61 per cent of landless farmers said they have a bank or post office account as compared to 73 per

cent small farmers who said they have one. Interestingly, the penetration of Aadhar card however is greater among landless farmers than small farmers. Large farmers seem to have both bank accounts and an Aadhar card in large numbers (Figure 1.10).

**Figure 1.10: Proportion of farmers with bank accounts and Aadhar card by Social Class.**



Note: All figures are in percentage; the rest did not have a bank account or an Aadhar card

Question asked: Do you or members of your household have the following - bank/post office account, UID/Aadhar card

The survey shows that 92 per cent of the farmers have a ration card. While 45 per cent of the farmers said they have a BPL ration card, 42 per cent have an APL card (Table 1.2).

**Table 1.2: Farmers with Ration cards**

Ration card	Per cent
Above poverty line	42
Below poverty line	45
Antyodaya	4
Annapurna	1
Do not have any card	8

Question asked: Which ration card do you have?

## Section 2

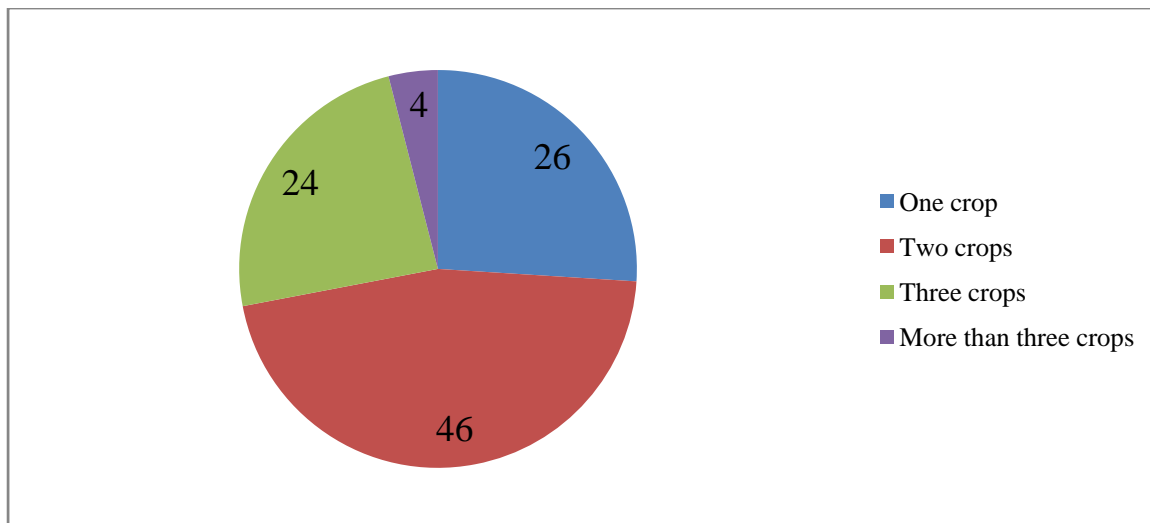
### Prevailing Farming Practices

What are the different practices that are being adopted by farmers? What kind of agricultural inputs do farmers use for farming? Which crops do they produce and how many times in a year? Are they producing the same crop throughout the year or do they produce different types of crops? How varied is the production from region to region? These are some of the questions that this section will try to answer based on survey data.

#### Crops

The findings of the survey suggest that nearly half the farmers (46 per cent) grow up to two crops in a year while 28 per cent said they produce more than two crops annually. 26 per cent of the farmers who were interviewed said they are able to produce only one crop in a year. These figures however differ from region to region due to quality of soil, irrigation facilities, climatic conditions and the fact that some regions are more prone to floods and droughts than others. The survey finds that 96 per cent of the farmers in North India grow two or more crops in year. In East and South India however this figure falls to 62 and 58 per cent respectively (Table 2.1).

**Figure 2.1: Number of crops grown by farmers in a year as per survey**



Note: All figures are in percentage

Question asked: How many crops do you grow in a year?

**Table 2.1: Number of crops grown by farmers in a year by Region**

Region	More than three crops	Three crops	Two crops	One Crop
North	5	33	58	4
East	3	20	39	37
Central	5	31	42	22
South	3	21	34	42
West	2	15	56	27

Note: All figures are in percentage

Question asked: How many crops do you grow in a year?

The Indian cropping pattern is unique in the world as it is characterized mainly by the paddy-wheat cropping pattern. Our data suggests that more than 60 per cent of the farmers are practicing this rice-wheat pattern. While 41 per cent of the farmers identified paddy as the main crop grown by them, 21 per cent said it was wheat (Table 2.2).

**Table 2.2: Which crops do farmers mainly grow?**

Crop type	Per cent
Paddy	41
Wheat	21
Bajra	5
Maize	4
Gram	4
Sugarcane	2
Soyabean	2
Cotton	3
Other	18

Note: All figures are in percentage;

Question asked: Mainly which crops do you grow?

### **Seeds:**

The survey found that a large proportion of farmers (70 per cent) use local or traditional seeds. On being asked further if they used Hybrid seeds, 63 per cent of the farmers answered in the affirmative. Very few (4 per cent) said that they use Genetically Modified seeds.

Regional analysis of types of seeds used by farmers gives a clear cut indication of preference for local or traditional seeds in Central, Eastern and Northern India. Western and Southern India had



a relatively lower preferences for local variety seeds. There was not much regional variation in the use of hybrid seeds (Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3: Regional picture of use of seeds**

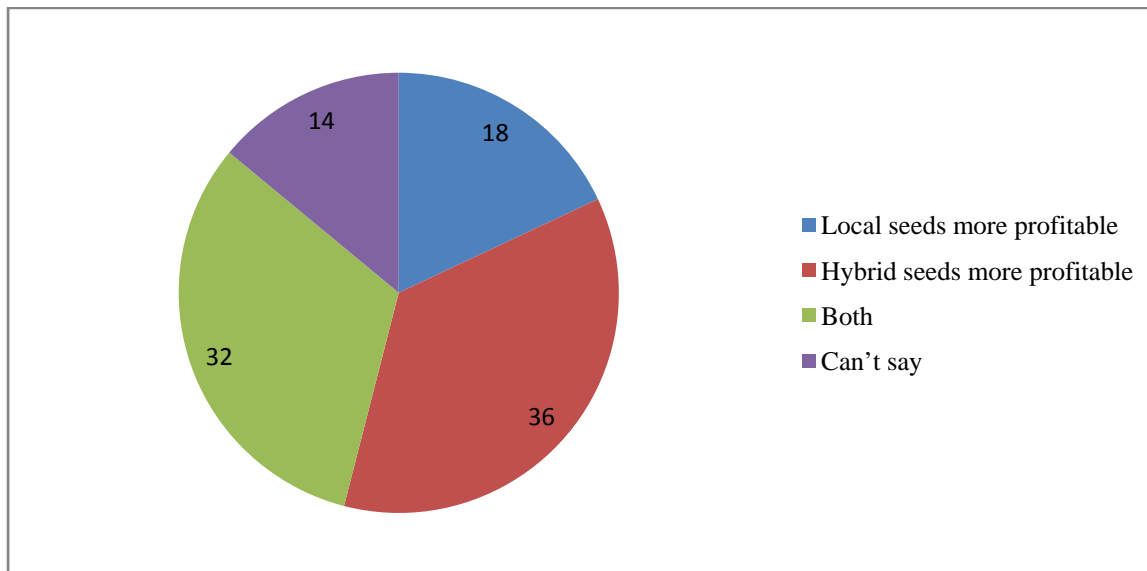
Region	Use Local Seeds	Use Hybrid Seeds	Use GM seeds
North	77	68	5
East	76	56	2
Central	80	60	4
South	59	61	5
West	62	68	4

Note: All figures are in percentage;

Question asked: Now, I will ask you regarding seeds. Please tell me; generally which kind of seeds do you use for farming?

Most farmers (36 per cent) were of the opinion that Hybrid seeds are more profitable than local seeds. 18 per cent felt otherwise while 32 per cent were of the opinion that both Hybrid and local seeds were profitable (Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2: Hybrid seed viewed as being more profitable**



Note: All figures are in percentage;

Question asked: Some farmers believe that usage of local seeds lead to higher profitability whereas others say that Hybrid seeds are more profitable? In your opinion which type of seed is more profitable?

On being asked a separate question on GM seeds and whether they were good for profitability, only 20 per cent of the farmers were of the opinion that GM seeds should be used in farming for higher profitability, whereas 42 per cent were of the opinion that they should not be used and 38 per cent did not have opinion on the issue.

### **Fertilizers**

Most farmers use both organic and chemical fertilizers for their farming. 40 per cent of the respondents said that they use both chemical and organic fertilizers. 35 per cent said they use only chemical fertilizers and 16 per cent said that they use only organic fertilizers (Table 2.4). A region wise analysis on the use of fertilizers reveals that Chemical fertilizers are being used most in Eastern India. Farmers in South India seem to be using organic fertilizer more than the rest of India.

**Table 2.4: Types of Fertilizers used by Farmers**

<b>Type of Fertilizers</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Use Organic fertilizers	16
Use Chemical fertilizers	35
Use Both fertilizers	40
Can't say	9

Question asked: Which kind of fertilizer do you use for farming- Organic or Chemical/Urea?

### **Pesticides**

The use of pesticides seems to be occasional. When asked how often they used pesticides, only 18 per cent farmers said they use it regularly. 28 per cent said they use it occasionally, while 30 per cent use pesticides only when the need arises. 13 per cent farmers never use pesticides in their farming (Table 2.5).

**Table 2.5: Use of pesticides by farmers**

<b>Use of pesticides</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Regular	18
Occasional	28
Rare	10
If need arises	30
Never	13

Note: All figures are in percentage;

Question asked: How often do you use pesticides in your farming- regularly, occasionally, rarely or never?

Small farmers are using pesticides more often than others. 54 per cent of the small farmers said they use pesticides regularly. The figure among medium and large farmers is much less at 27 per cent and 10 per cent respectively (Table 2.6). One-fourth of the farmers who use pesticides use it for all their crops. 32 per cent use it for some crops and an equal proportion use it whenever the need arises.

**Table 2.6: Pesticide Usage by Social Class**

Social class	Regularly use pesticides
Small farmers	54
Medium farmers	27
Large farmers	10

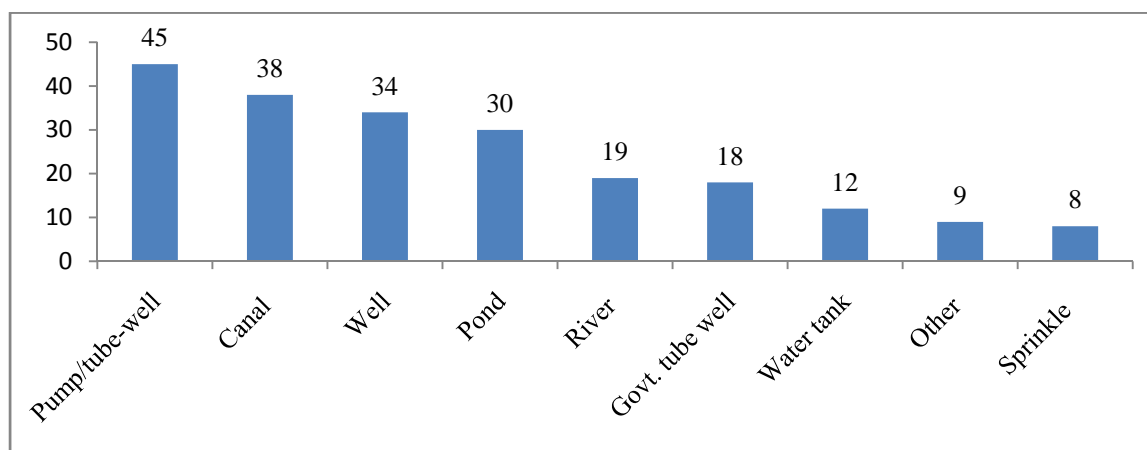
Note: All figures are in percentage; among those who use pesticides.

Question asked: How often do you use pesticides in your farming- regularly, occasionally, rarely or never?

### **Irrigation**

Only 40 per cent of the farmers said that irrigation facilities were available for their entire farming land. The most common sources for irrigation are private pumps, bore wells/boring and tube wells. 45 per cent of the farmers cited these as their main source of irrigation. 38 per cent of the farmers have access to canals in their villages for irrigation. Traditional sources of irrigation like pond and well continue to be important. 34 per cent of the farmers depend on wells while 30 per cent of the farmers said they depend on the pond to irrigate their land. Only 18 per cent of the farmers said that they have the facility of Govt. tube wells for irrigation (Figure 2.3).

**Figure 2.3: Most important sources of Irrigation**



Note: All figure in per cent.

Question asked: Which of the following means of irrigation are present in your area?

## **Electricity**

Irrigation facilities are largely dependent on the availability of electricity. However, more than half the farmers said that there had been no electricity for farming (51 per cent) in their area in the week prior to the survey. If we see the region wise distribution, 87 per cent of the farmers in East India complained about not getting electricity for farming. North India comes next with 46 per cent followed by Central India with 42 per cent (Table 2.7).

**Table 2.7: Regional picture for no electricity for farming**

<b>Region</b>	<b>No electricity for farming</b>
North	46
East	87
Central	42
South	39
West	40

Note: All figure in per cent.

Question asked: In the last seven days, for how many hours did you get electricity for Farming?

When asked if in order to receive uninterrupted power supply they were ready to pay more for it than what they pay today, 46 per cent of farmers rejected the idea, while 31 per cent said that they are willing to pay more for uninterrupted electricity supply. Rest had no opinion on this question. Most farmers say that in the absence of electricity, they depend on rainfall (35 per cent) followed by generator/engine (25 per cent) and canals (14 per cent) to irrigate their fields.

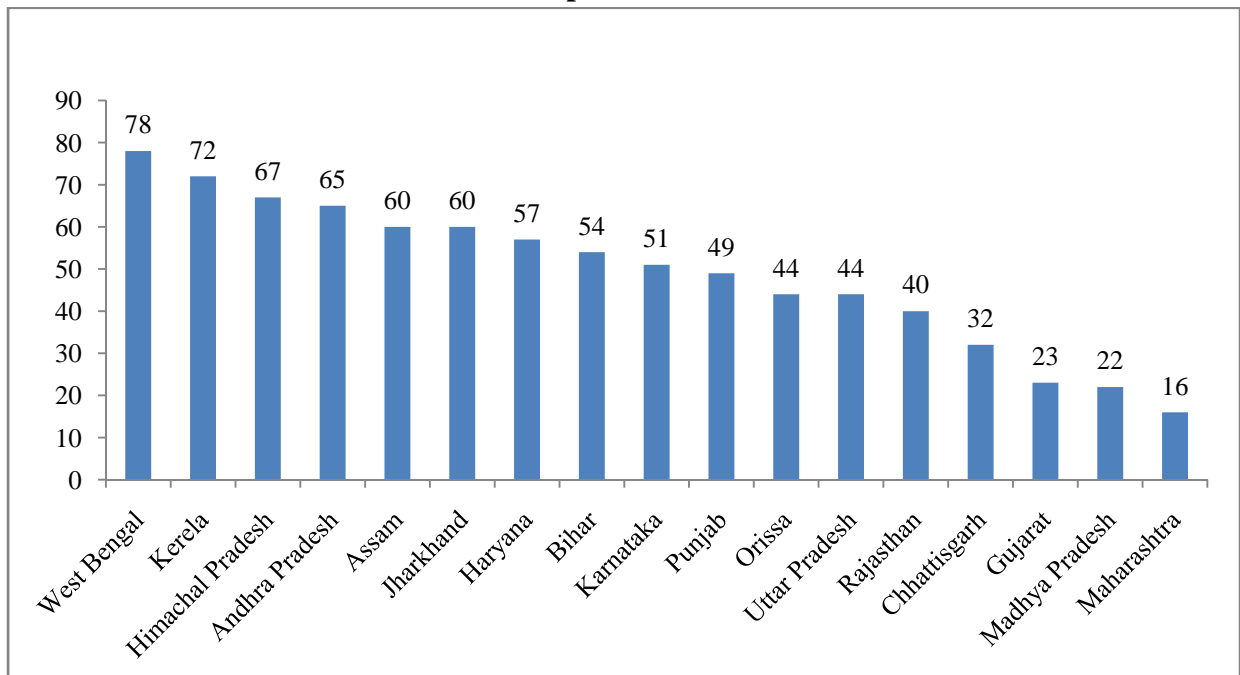
### Section 3

#### Challenges and Problems faced by Indian Farmer

This section describes the overall condition of Indian farmers; the challenges and problems they face. It also delves into the incidence and reasons of crop failure and suicide. And finally we take a look at issues related to housing, marriage, education, employment health, and loan. How do Indian farmers view the overall condition of their counterparts? Around 47 per cent of farmers said that the overall condition of farmers in the country is bad, whereas only 15 per cent of them reported good condition.

Most farmers from eastern and southern states of India rate the condition of farmers more negatively than their counterparts in other regions. The assessment of the general condition of farmers is most negative in West Bengal followed by southern state of Kerala. Interestingly, overall farmers from Western and Central India are least unhappy with the farmers' condition (Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1: Overall Condition of Farmers is perceived to be bad in Most States**



Note: All figures are in percentage.

Question asked: How would you rate the overall condition of the farmers in this country - Is it very good, good, somewhat good, bad or very bad?

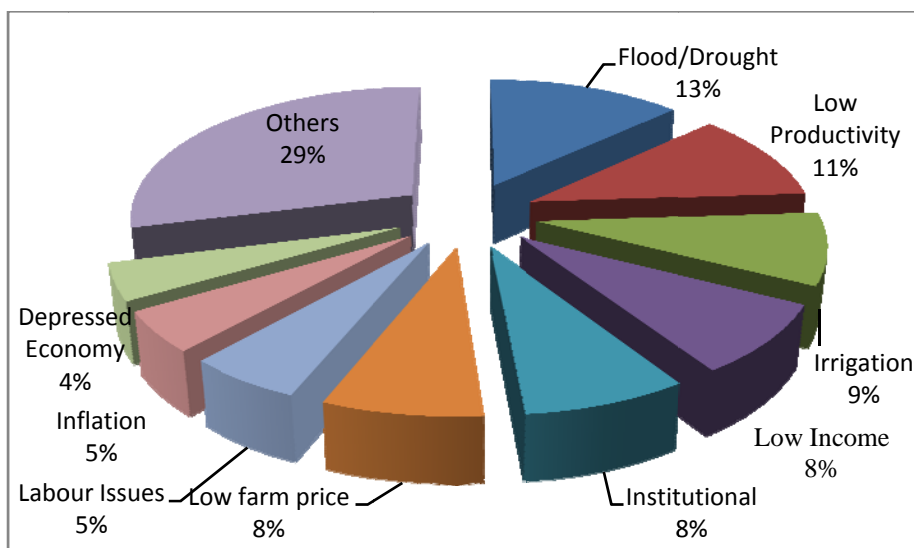
Female members of the farmers' household think that the agricultural income is not sufficient to meet their household expenditure. 67 per cent of the women said that the agricultural income

falls short to meet their household expenditure. Only 20 per cent said that the income they earn from agriculture is sufficient to meet their household expenditure. Therefore, they believe that if their family engages in other professions it would improve their quality of life.

### Problems faced by Indian Farmer

Indian farmers perceive natural calamities as one of the biggest problem followed by low productivity (Figure 3.2). We disaggregated the data and find interesting regional variation on this question (Table 3.1). Irrigation emerged as the most important problem in East and Central India, whereas low productivity in South and West. In North India, labour related issues are the most important problem faced by the farmer.

**Figure 3.2: Biggest Problem of the Farmer**



Question asked: In your opinion what is the biggest problem faced by Indian farmers today?

**Table 3.1: Regional Variations in problems faced by Farmers**

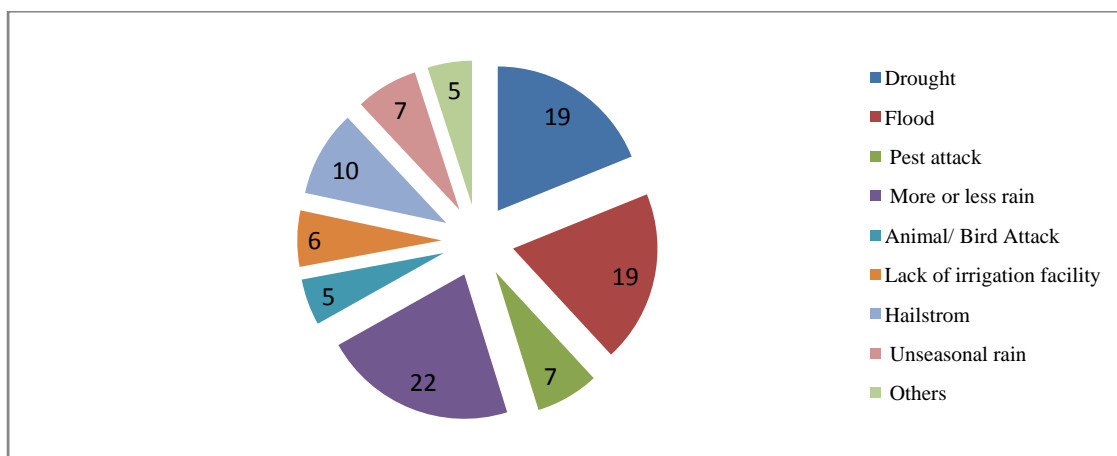
Region	First Major Problem	Second Major Problem	Third Major Problem
North	Labour Issues	Low Productivity	Low Income
East	Irrigation	Flood/Drought	Low Productivity
Central	Irrigation	Labour Issues	Inflation
South	Low Productivity	Depressed Economy	Irrigation
West	Low Productivity	Low Income	Flood/Drought

A majority of farmers (58 per cent) think both State and the Central government are responsible for their problems. Another 22 per cent holds only the Central government and 20 per cent holds only the state government accountable for their condition

### Crop destruction and Suicide

Approximately 70 per cent farmers said that their crops got destroyed in the last three years. Figure 3.3 suggests that the main reasons for crop destruction are uncertain rainfall, drought and flood, destruction of crop by diseases and birds/animal, and lack of irrigation.

**Figure 3.3: Reasons for Crop Destruction**

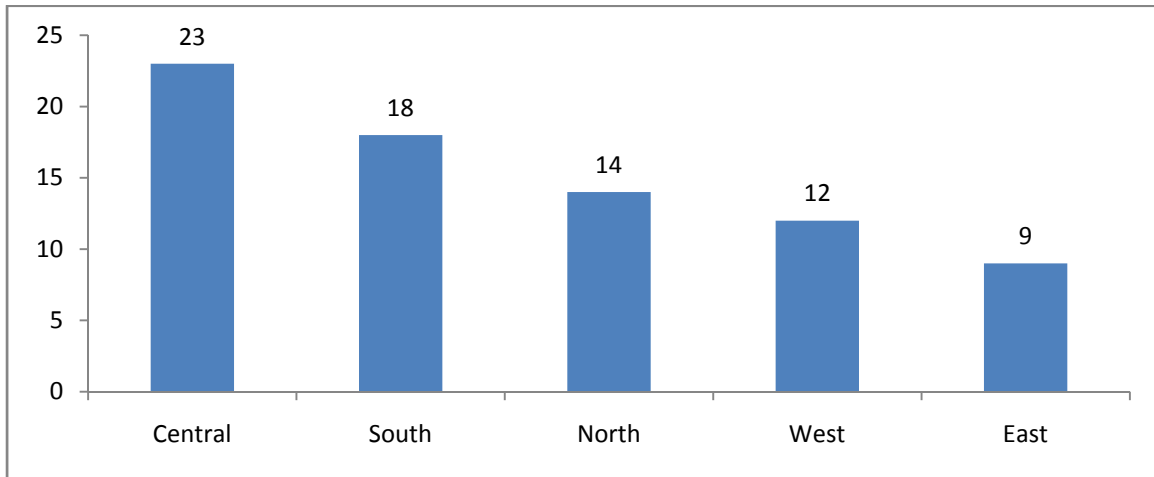


Note: All figures are in percentage.

Question asked: If Crops destroyed, then what was the main reason for the destruction of the crop?

The survey also probed whether the farmers have any knowledge about anyone committing suicides in the last 5 years in their locality. Approximately one in every seven respondent (15 per cent) said they have heard about suicides in their area. Figure 3.4 suggests that more respondents from central India have heard about suicides in their area in comparison to other regions. A large chunk of respondents reports domestic problems (41 per cent) as most important reason for suicide cases followed by credit/loan (35 per cent) and crop failure (14 per cent).

**Figure 3.4: Knowledge of Someone Committing Suicide in the Area by Region**



Note: All figures are in percentage.

Question asked: In your knowledge has anybody in your village or area committed suicide in the last five years?

### Life Worries

Basic minimum requirements like education, health and employment emerged as major responsibilities that worry Indian farmers. Contrary to general opinion, we find a low proportion of farmers worried about repayment of loans. Interestingly, 39 per cent of the respondents were not worried at all about repayment of loan. Housing and marriage in the household also seem to be a reason for worry among Indian farmers.

**Table 3.2: Worried over Major Responsibilities in Life**

Life Responsibilities	Very Much	Some Extent	Not at all
Education of children	60	30	10
Farming	59	33	8
Employment	58	35	8
Health	53	39	7
Marriage in household	47	40	14
Buying a house	33	39	28
Repayment of Loan	31	30	39

Note: All figures are in percentage. Rest did not express their opinion on this question.

Question asked: Now I will read some important responsibilities of a human life. You tell me how much you worry about major life responsibilities

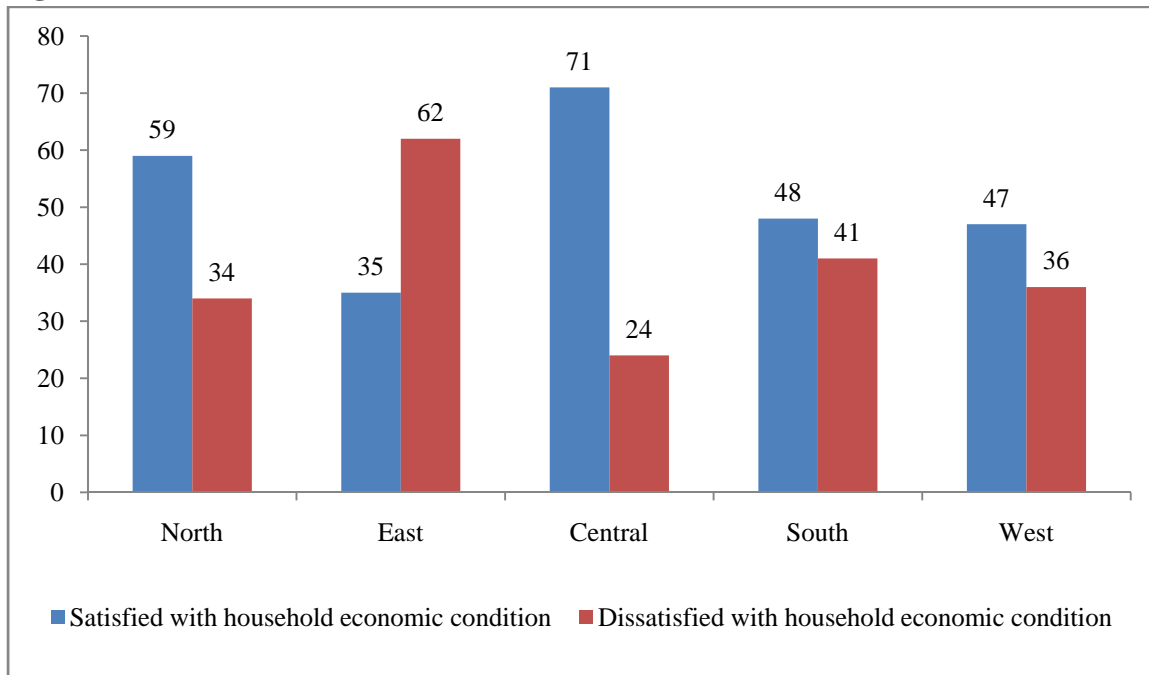


## Section 4

### Indian Farmers: Their Economic Outlook

The conditions of farmers in India seem to be very unpleasant and therefore farmers do not want their children to continue farming. Low income and productivity, irregular weather cycles, and low levels of support from the government seem to be the most important reasons among farmers for such dissatisfaction. We asked farmers' about their present economic condition. Around 50 per cent of the farmers are satisfied and 40 per cent were dissatisfied with their present economic condition. The regional pattern suggests that farmers from Central India are more satisfied while their counterparts in Eastern India seem to be most dissatisfied with their present economic condition (Figure 4.1). Not surprisingly, landless farmers are least satisfied with their present economic condition and the large farmers are comparatively more satisfied with their present economic condition.

**Figure 4.1: Farmers' Satisfaction with Their Present Economic Condition**



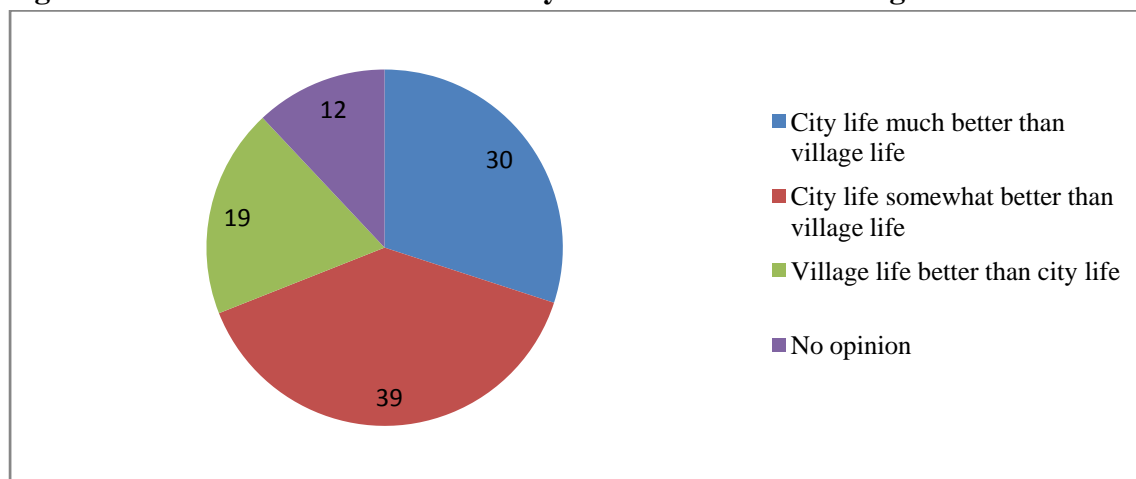
Note: All figures are in per cent. The rest did not express any opinion on this question.

Question asked: Compared to five years ago, how is the economic condition of your household today – would you say it has become much better, better, remained same, become worse or become much worse?

Farmers were also asked to compare their present economic condition with their condition five years ago. 40 per cent said that compared to past five years their present economic condition has improved, 37 per cent said no change, and 15 per cent said that their condition has worsened in comparison to past five years. Nevertheless, farmers are optimistic about their future economic condition. Approximately half of the respondents (42 per cent) feel their economic condition will improve, 19 per cent said it is likely to remain the same, and 10 per cent feel their economic condition will become worse in next five years. In both past and future economic condition questions, large farmers are doing very well in comparison to landless and small farmers.

The dissatisfaction with economic condition lies at the heart of why majority of farmers (69 per cent) think that city life is much better than village life. Very few farmers (19 per cent) were of the opinion that village life was better than city life (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2: Most farmers think that City Life is Better than Village Life**

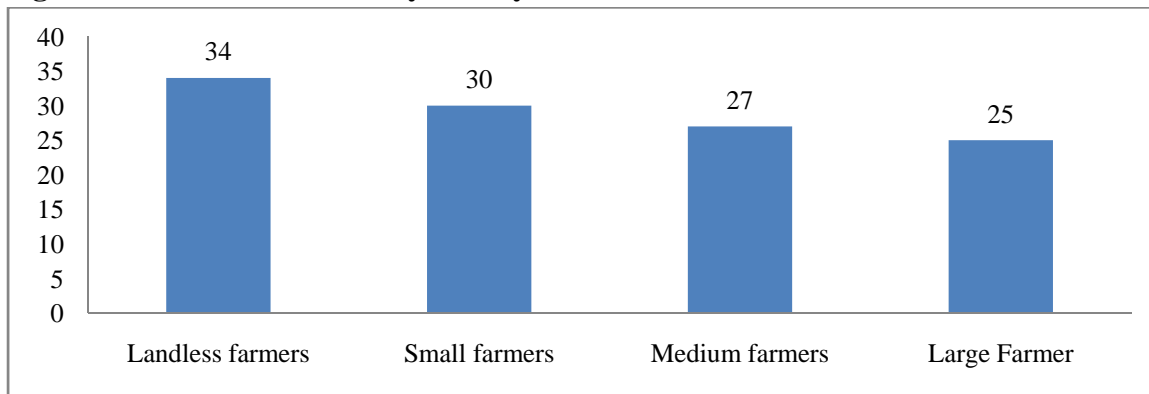


Note: All figures are in per cent.

Question asked: In your opinion how good is city life in comparison with village life. Is it very good, somewhat good or not good at all?

The survey reveals that farmers who have no land (landless farmers) show a much stronger preference for city life over village life (Figure 4.3). One possible explanation could be that there are more employment opportunities in cities in comparison to villages.

**Figure 4.3: Preference for City Life by Social Class of Farmers**

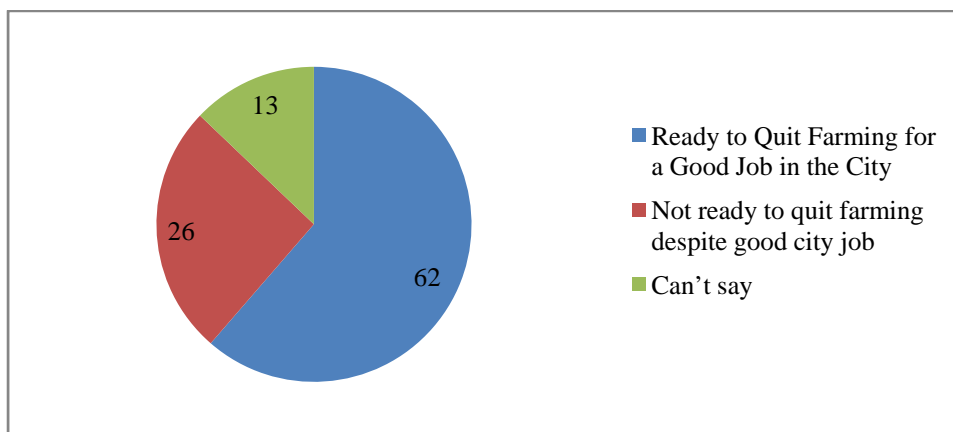


Note: All figures are in percentage; only for those who said that city life is very good.

Question asked: In your opinion how good is city life in comparison with village life. Is it very good, somewhat good or not good at all?

On being asked whether they would leave farming if they get an employment opportunity in the city, 61 per cent of the farmers answered in the affirmative and 26 per cent said they would not. Half the farmers who said they are ready to quit farming if given an employment opportunity in the city said that they would do so only if the city job was a good one (Figure 4.4). Farmers who have no land or a small piece of land are more open to the idea of quitting farming and migrating to cities for jobs that give a higher income. On the other hand, large farmers (those with big landholdings) are much less willing to quit farming for a city job.

**Figure 4.4: Would You Quit Farming if You Get Employed in the City?**



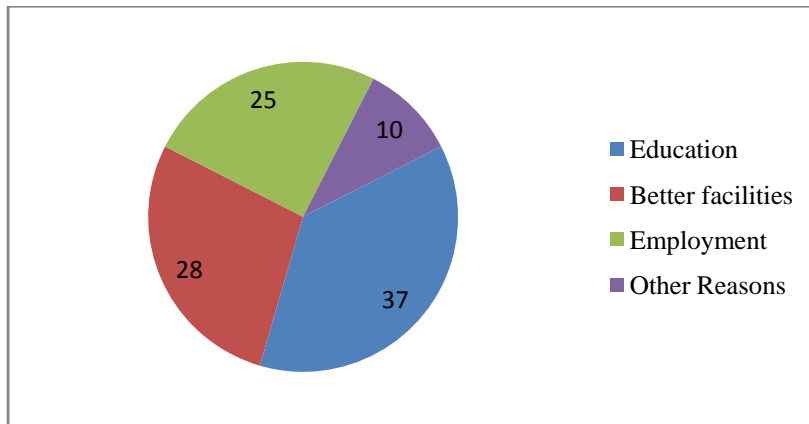
Note: All figures are in percentage;

Question asked: Suppose you get an employment opportunity in a city, would you leave farming and take that opportunity for a better income?

The survey reveals that most farmers do not see a future for their children in farming and would like to see them settle in the city. When farmers were asked whether they want their children to settle in the city, as many as 60 per cent said they want their children to settle in the city. Another

14 per cent do not want their children to settle in the city, whereas 19 per cent said they will prefer their children's choice on this matter. Better education was cited as one of the most important reason of why farmers want their children to settle in cities, followed by better facilities, and employment opportunities (Figure 4.5).

**Figure 4.5: Why do farmers want their children to settle in the city?**



Note: All figures are in percentage; only among those who said that they want their children to settle in the city.  
Question asked: What is the main reason for which you would want your children to settle in the city?

Most farmers consider farming as their ancestral occupation and they like farming as an occupation. However, when asked whether they would like to see their children engaging in farming, only 18 per cent responded positively. 36 per cent said they do not want their children to continue farming as their occupation and 37 per cent said they will prefer their children's choice and go with their decision while choosing their profession.

Why are farmers disillusioned with farming? Why do they not want their children to continue farming? We found various responses from farmers and most of them said they want their children to do some better job other than farming. Farmers believe that farming is not a profitable profession and earning is not enough so their children should opt out from farming. There is no future in farming that is why their children should quit farming. We also find that those who do not want their children to continue farming are more likely to say that their children should settle down in cities. The sentiment that their children should not continue farming is strongest among landless and small farmers (39 per cent) and weakest among large farmers (28 per cent).

Not only do most farmers want their children to quit farming and do some other jobs, young members of a farmer household also seem to be less interested in doing farming. In the survey we also interviewed a young person from a farmer household to know their opinion on farming and most of them (60 per cent) said that they would prefer to do some other jobs, whereas only

20 per cent said they would continue farming. Table 4.1 lists out the reasons why these young members are not interested in farming.

**Table 4.1: Why do the Young not want to pursue farming?**

	Per cent
Interested in other job or work	36
Earning is not good	22
I am highly educated so this work is not for me	8
Risky/mental tension	7
Agriculture is a ruined area	5
Others	6

Note: The rest of the respondents had no opinion; this question was only asked to a young member of the household. Question asked: What is your main reason for not opting for farming?

We also interviewed one female respondent from every sampled household. A majority of these female respondents (67 per cent) feel that agricultural income is not sufficient to meet their household expenditure. Only 20 per cent feel that agricultural income is sufficient. Similarly, 43 per cent female respondents feel that their quality of life would better if their family members had been in a profession other than farming.

### **Economic Hardships**

In the survey, only 5 per cent respondents said that in last five years they had to sell their land. Poor financial condition (27 per cent) seems to be the most important reason followed by money required for a marriage in the family. Some farmers also had to sell their land due to the pressure of land acquisition (Table 4.2).

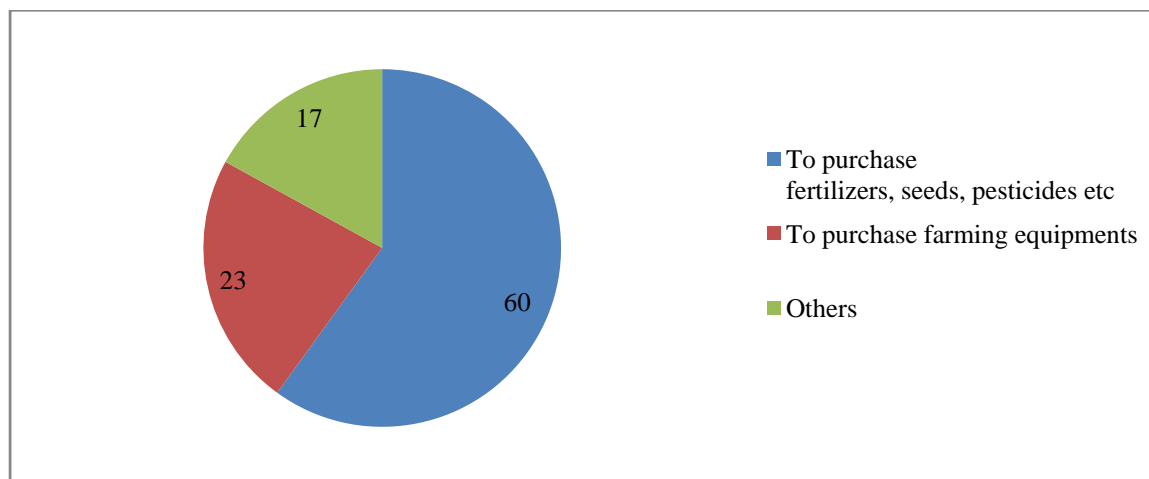
**Table 4.2: Reasons for selling the land**

	Per cent
Poor financial condition	27
Money required for family marriage	15
Pressure of land acquisition	9
For business/education of son/daughter	9
Had to return money to the money Lender	7
Got a Good Deal	7
For medical expenditure/Treatment	6
Property was disputed and there was pressure to sell	4
Other Reasons	

Note: Figures above are only for those who had to sell their land. Question asked: Why did you sell your land?

Likewise, only two out of ten farmers said that in last five years they had take loan for farming related activity. The loans were primarily taken for purchasing fertilizers, seeds, pesticides etc. or buying farming equipments like tractor, thrasher etc. (Figure 4.6).

**Figure 4.6: Why do Farmers Take a Loan?**



Note: All figures are in per cent.

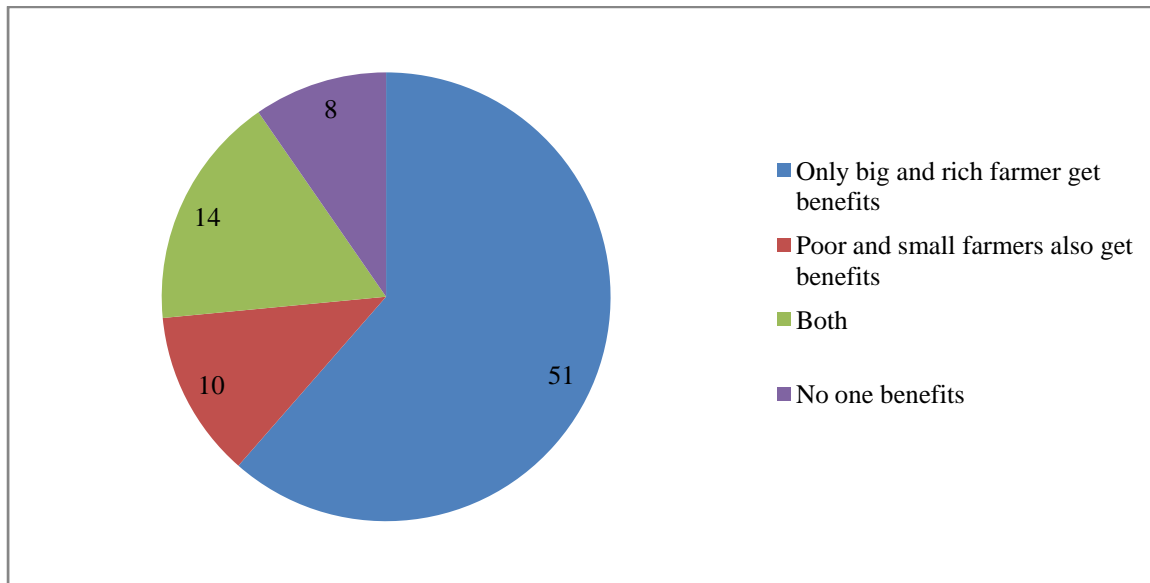
Question asked: If taken loan, then the loan you took for farming was used mainly for which purpose?

## Section 5

### Awareness and Opinion on Issues Related to Politics and Government

Farmers are not happy with the overall condition of farmers in India. This is despite the fact that the government of India claims to have introduced many schemes and policies to improve their condition. Most respondents (50 per cent) feel that only rich farmers got the benefits of government schemes and policies related to farming. Only 10 per cent believe that poor and small farmers have got the benefit from farming related schemes and another 8 per cent saw no benefit whatsoever either to large farmers or marginal farmers (Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1: Opinion on who Benefits from Governments' Schemes?**



Note: All figures are in percentage; rest did not express any opinion on this question.

Question asked: People have different opinion about agriculture related policies of the government. Some people believe only rich and large farmers have benefited from these policies while others say that poor and marginal farmers have also benefited. What is your opinion?

To tap into the farmers' perception on current political issues, the survey also asked questions on government schemes.

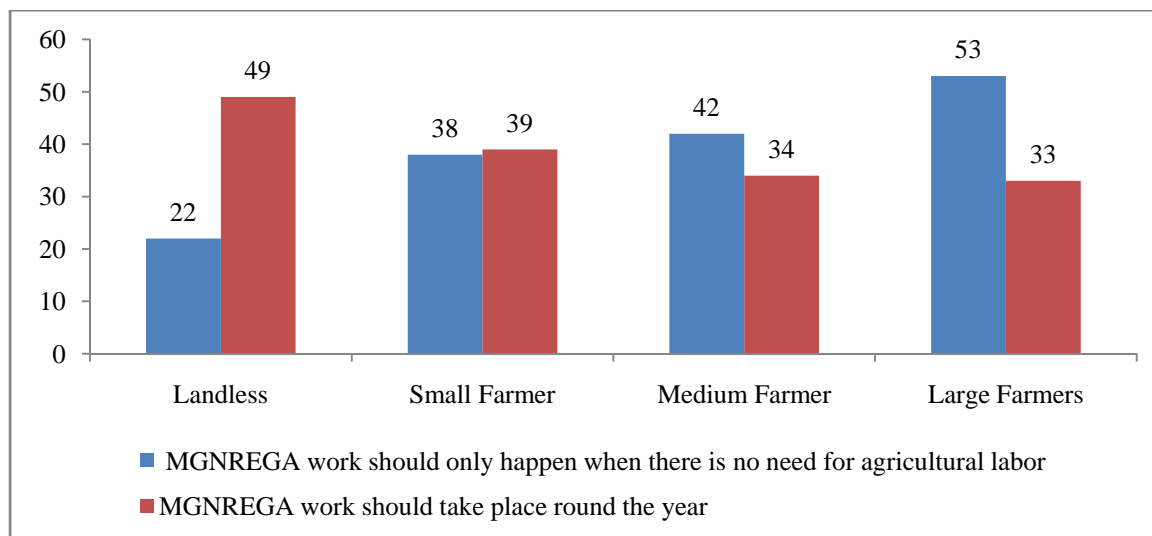
#### **MGNREGA and Cash Transfer**

Approximately 85 per cent of the farmers have heard about the rural employment guarantee scheme. The farmers from Central and South India were found to be more aware about MGNREGA and farmers from the Western states of India are comparatively less aware about it.

Among those who have heard about this scheme, only 44 per cent admitted that a member of their household had got work under this scheme, whereas 51 per cent said that their household did not get work under this scheme.

We asked the respondents in this survey whether MGNREGA work should take place round the year or it should only happen when there is no need for agricultural labor. Not surprisingly the opinion was divided. As expected, most of the landless laborers were of the opinion that MGNREGA work should take place throughout the year compared to other farmers and large farmers who are more supportive of the idea that MGNREGA work should only happen when there is no need for agricultural labor (Figure 5.2).

**Figure 5.2: Who favors year round work under MGNREGA?**



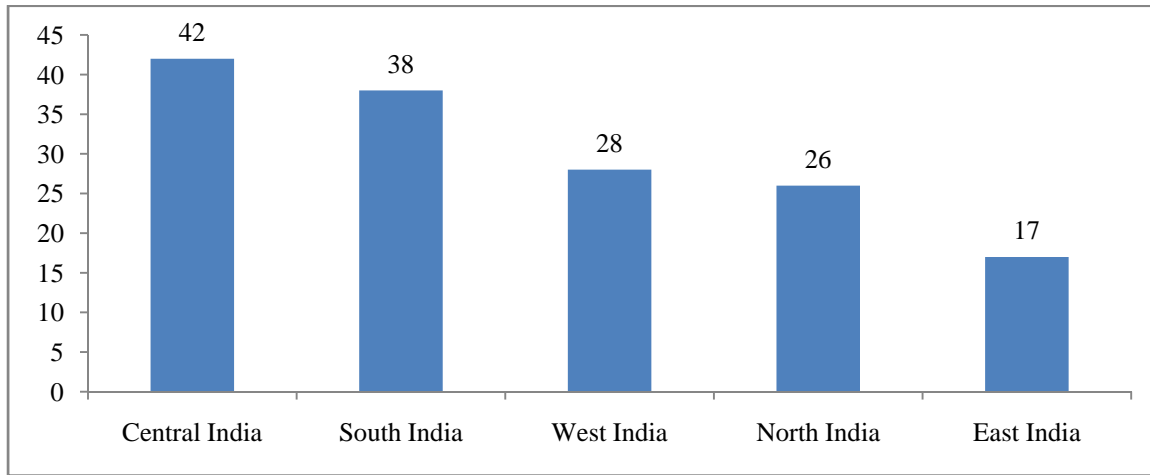
Note: All figures are in percentage; the rest did not express any opinion on this question.

Question asked: Some people believe that work under MGNREGA should be allotted when there is no need for agriculture labor, while others feel that work under MGNREGA should take place throughout. What is your opinion?

Most farmers (70 per cent) have not heard about Direct Cash Transfer scheme. Landless farmers are least aware about the Direct Cash Transfer scheme with only 13 per cent of them having heard about it. On the other hand awareness among large farmers was found to be highest at 54 per cent. There is also a regional variation in awareness about this scheme (Figure 5.3).



**Figure 5.3: Regional Variation in Awareness about Direct Cash Transfer**

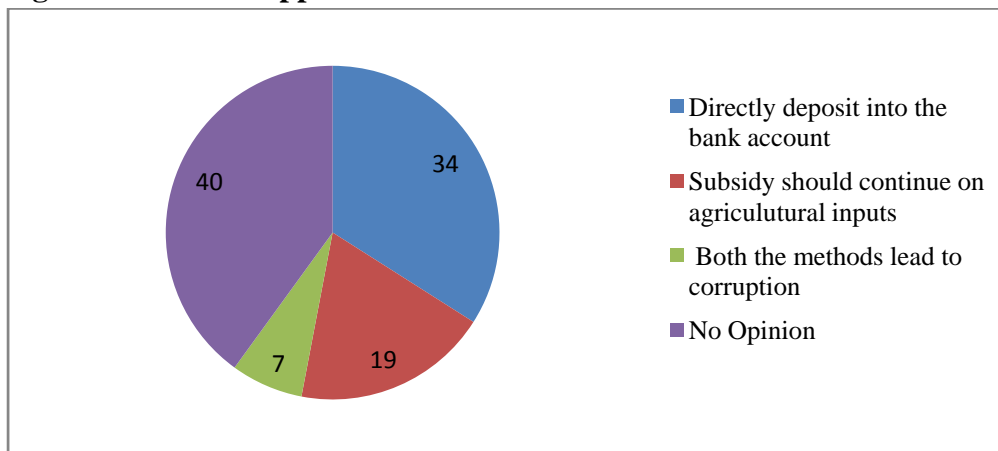


Note: All figures are in percentage; the rest did not express any opinion on this question.

Question asked: Have you heard about the Direct Cash Transfer scheme (According to this money for subsidy will go directly to your bank account)?

We asked the farmer respondents about their opinion on the Direct Cash Transfer scheme - whether they want the subsidy for agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers etc. to be directly deposited in their bank account so that they can use that money as per their needs or whether they want the subsidy to continue as it. We did not get any clear answer on this question as 40 per cent of the farmers did not express their opinion on this issue. No Opinion was mostly among landless farmers. Nonetheless, 34 per cent farmers support the idea of subsidy benefits going directly to their bank accounts. Only 19 per cent said that the subsidy should continue as it is. 7 per cent farmers spoke about the probability of corruption in both the methods (Figure 5.4).

**Figure 5.4: More Support for Direct Cash Transfer than Subsidies**



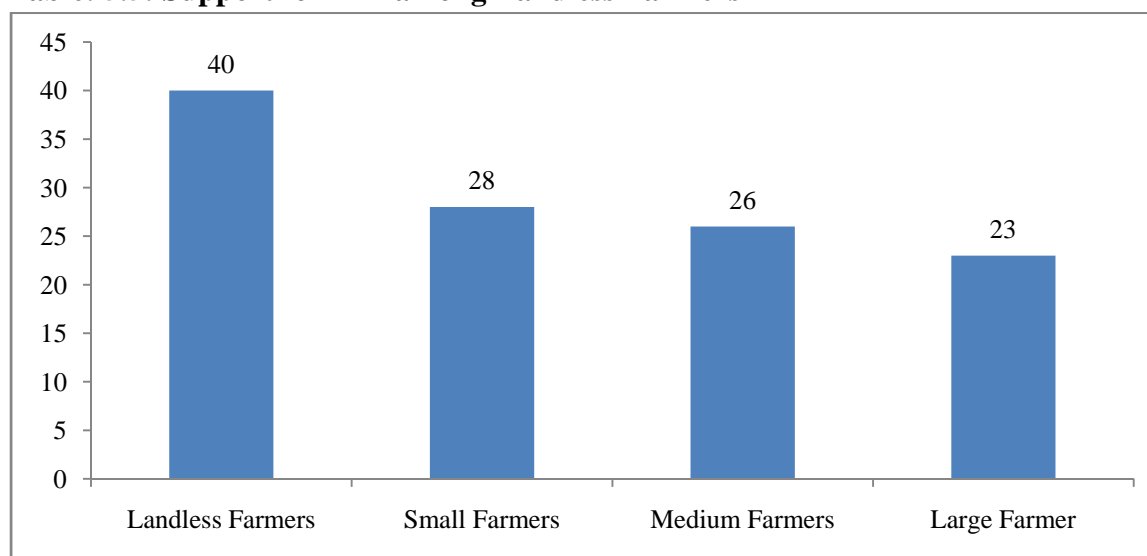
Note: All figures are in percentage.

Question asked: Some farmers believe that subsidy for agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers etc should be directly deposited in farmer's account so that they can use that money as per their needs. What is your opinion about the same?

## Land Acquisition and FDI

Only 27 per cent of the farmers have heard about the Land Acquisition law. Among those who had heard about this law, only 21 per cent said that farmers stand to benefit from the law, and 57 per cent of the respondents said that farmers stands to lose from this law, whereas 22 per cent did not express their opinion on this issue. The survey also finds that 83 per cent of the farmers have not heard about Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Among those who have heard of FDI, a majority (51 per cent) said that FDI should not be allowed in the agriculture sector since farmers may not be able to bargain, whereas 28 per cent said that FDI should be allowed in the agriculture sector so that farmers can sell their crops directly to the big companies. Another 21 per cent expressed no opinion on this question. Interestingly, the landless farmers are more in support of foreign direct investment in agriculture because they believe that it will allow farmers to sell their agricultural produce directly to the big companies. 40 per cent of the landless farmers supported the idea of FDI in agriculture. On the contrary, the large farmers with big landholdings do not support FDI in the agriculture sector because they believe that it would harm the bargaining capacity of the farmers (Figure 5.5).

**Table: 5.5: Support for FDI among Landless Farmers**



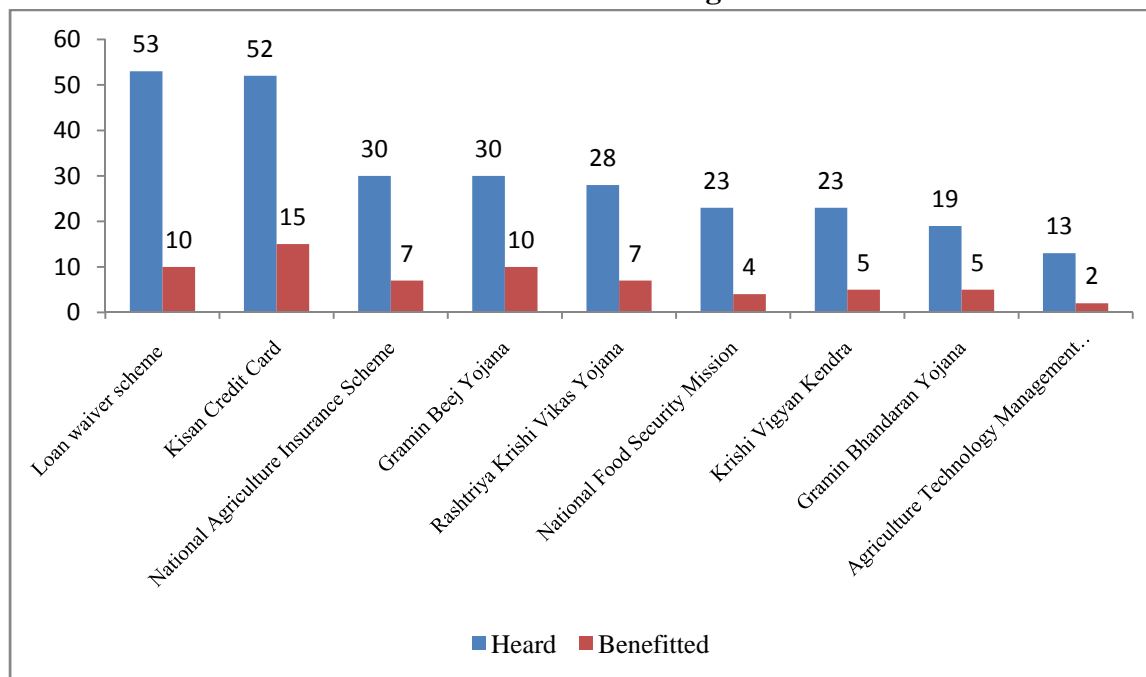
Note: All figures are in percentage; the rest did not express any opinion on this question. Responses above are of those who are aware of FDI.

Question asked: (If heard) Now I will read out two statements relating to FDI. Please tell me whether you agree with statement one or statement two. (1) FDI should be allowed in the agriculture sector so that farmers can sell their crops directly to the big companies; (2) FDI should not be allowed in the agriculture sector since farmers may not be able to bargain.

## Awareness about Agricultural Schemes

We also asked whether farmers have heard or benefitted from government schemes like Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Gramin Bhandaran Yojana, National Food Security Mission, National Agriculture Insurance Scheme, Agriculture Technology Management Agency, Gramin Beej Yojana, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kisan Credit Card and the Loan waiver scheme. Figure 5.6 suggest that farmers are unaware of most issues and thus have not been able to take benefit of these schemes.

**Table 5.6: Lack of awareness about farmer related government schemes**



Note: All figures are in per centage. Rest had not heard and not Benefitted.

Question asked: Now I will read out some of the schemes which are related to farming. Please tell me, have you heard or read about these schemes? (If heard/read)Have you or your family benefitted from any of these schemes?

## Minimum Support Price

Similarly, awareness about Minimum Support Price (MSP), under which purchases are made from the farmers at the rates declared by the Government of India, is also low. Approximately 62 per cent of the interviewed farmers were not aware about MSP, whereas 38 per cent had heard about MSP. Among those who had heard about MSP, most (64 per cent) said that they were not satisfied with the rates of crops decided by the government and only 27 per cent are satisfied with the rates of crops decided by the Government. The survey findings clearly indicate that farmers are not well informed about the schemes aimed for them and about the provisions made under those schemes. What's more, the facility provided to farmers whereby they can get information or help related to agricultural matters like soil test, use of fertilizers etc. from

officers of the agricultural department does not seem to be working well either. Three-fourths of the farmers said that they did not get any information or help from the agricultural department on these matters.

### **Political Participation**

When farmers were asked about their opinion on whether demonstrations, strikes, gheraos etc. are appropriate ways through which farmers can fight for their rights, 67 per cent said yes they were appropriate, whereas only 7 per cent considered them to be inappropriate means (Table 5.1). However, when asked further if they themselves had taken part in a demonstration or a strike in the last five years, only 18 per cent reported to have done so. Three-fourths of the interviewed farmers said they had not taken part in any demonstration or strike in the last five years.

**Table 5.1: Opinion on Demonstrations, Strikes etc.**

Demonstrations, strikes, gheraos are.....	Per cent
Acceptable	32
Acceptable, as per the situation	35
Unacceptable, but the only way out	10
Unacceptable	7

Note: The rest did not give an opinion on the question.

Question asked: Some people believe that demonstrations, strikes, gheraos etc. are the appropriated ways through which farmers can fight for their rights, while the others believe that demonstration, strikes etc are not the appropriate means? What is your opinion about the same?

Farmers were asked to report the most important issue for the upcoming 2014 Lok Sabha elections in an open ended question. Most of the farmers said that price rise will be the most important issue for them when they go out to vote in the 2014 Lok Sabha election. 17 per cent of the surveyed farmers reported price rise as an issue followed by other issues like unemployment, irrigation, and corruption.