



INDIA

NATIONAL STUDY

FARM TO SYSTEMS

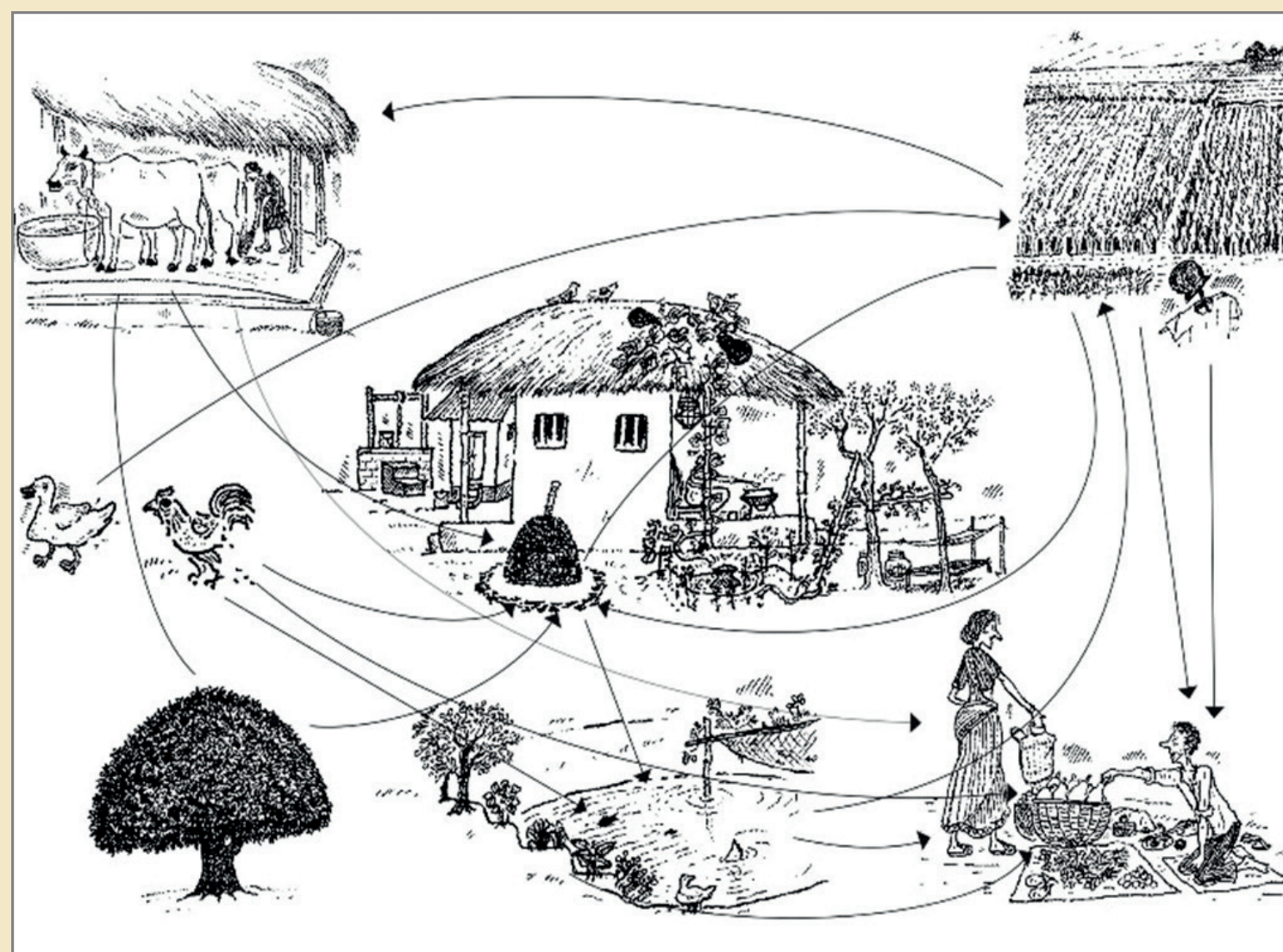
SUSTAINABLE INTEGRATED FARMING SYSTEMS: AN AGROECOLOGICAL APPROACH TO IMPROVE PRODUCTION AND MARKET ACCESS FOR SMALL AND MARGINAL FAMILY FARMERS

In small and remote villages in South Asia, our rich agricultural crop/breed diversity and associated knowledge is slowly getting wiped out and is being replaced by a handful of 'high yielding' and 'improved' crops/breeds. Rampant use of chemicals has led to the death of soil and is poisoning our food and ecosystem. The small and marginal farmers, the majority of the developing world's population, who often own less than an acre of land are getting further marginalized - they neither have resources to invest, nor can they earn any significant amount of profit. Sustainable Integrated Farming System – SIFS, tries to look deeper into this agrarian crisis.

SIFS is an improved version of mixed cropping, which tries to imitate nature's principles, where not only crops but, varied types of plants, animals, birds, fish and other aquatic flora and fauna are utilized for production. These are combined in such a way and proportion that each element helps the other; the waste of one is recycled as resource for the other.

STRATEGY

Enhancing diversity and recycling linkages between various components of a farm system



- Reduce disaster risk
- Reduce climate hazard risk
- Reduce health risk
- Reduce market dependency

- Improve soil health
- Improve farmer's health
- Improve livestock health
- Improve market link
- Improve energy flow within the system
- Improve fuel availability

- Diversify income source
- Diversify farm output
- Diversify time of harvest
- Diversify diet
- Diversify job option

RESULTS

- » At the farm level, overall production, income and nutrition – both food and fodder, is enhanced and diversified both in terms of quantity and quality; incidence of risk is reduced. Cost of production reduces and self-sufficiency increases as the system becomes energy efficient as a whole.
- » In the process, the farmers became innovative, self-reliant, analytic and technologically sound to assess their own resources, strengths and stresses, and SIFS design their own farm.

- » The programme has developed 150 farmer trainers, who can train other farmers. It worked with 10 000 families (over a 5 500 Hectare), to transform 650 ha of barren fallow land to cultivable land, and double 850 ha of single crop land.
- » During baseline, 77 percent of the farms had only 1 crop in the cropland; homestead land were hardly used. Now, about 49 percent grows 2 crops and 33 percent grows 3 crops and 7 percent grows more than 3 crops. Whereas 75 percent of farms are stabilized to 5~7 types of vegetables to improve dietary diversity.

- » 40 percent of farmers in the rainy season are getting 52~68 percent of their required input by recycling wastes, which is about 38 percent in winter.
- » About 69 percent of farmers on an average shown productivity which is more than the average productivity of the area in baseline.
- » 88 percent of farmers recorded increased net income (52 percent have doubled their net income). For all the farms, About 50 percent of the cash needs come from selling farm products after meeting the subsistence needs.

