

Revision Notes
Chapter – 24
Rural and Urban Livelihoods

Rural Livelihoods

There are several livelihoods in rural areas.

Kalpattu Village

- (i) Kalpattu in Tamil Nadu is a village near to the sea coast.
- (ii) Ploughing is not done here. People are busy in activities like making pots, utensils, weaving baskets and making bricks in kilns.
- (iii) It has a number of shops, Tea shop, grocery shop, cloth shop, barber shop, tailor, two fertilizer and seed shop are some major shops are found here.
- (iv) There are also shops selling tiffin items such as idli, dosa and upma in the morning and snacks like vadai, bonda and mysorepak in the evening.
- (v) There is also a shop of cycle repairing and hiring. There are families that earn their living by washing clothes. There are some people who go to nearby town to work as construction workers and lorry drivers.
- (vi) Paddy is the main crop that is grown in irrigated lands. Most of the families are dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods.
- (vii) There are some plants, which are grown in the village, such as coconut groves, cotton, sugarcane, plantain, mango orchards etc.

Life in Rural Areas:

- (i) There is a lot of work in rural areas in the harvesting season.
- (ii) About two-third of India's farmers are landless labourers.
- (iii) People work as daily labourers.

(iv) Women do their domestic duties and even work in fields.

(v) Since farmers do not have money they fall in a debt trap. They have to sell their produce to the trader from whom they loan seeds and fertilizers at a lower price than what they would get in the market.

(vi) Sometimes the farmers are unable to pay back their loans. This is when we can say they are caught in debt. In recent years, many farmers have committed suicide because of distress due to non-payment of loans among them.

Agricultural Labourers and Farmers in India:

The kinds of people who reside in villages include:

(a) Agricultural labourers

(b) Many small farmers

(c) A few big farmers

(i) In India, about two out of five rural families are agricultural labourer families. All of them depend on the work they do on other people's field to earn a living. A number of them are landless and others may have very small plots of land.

(ii) In India, 80 per cent of the farmers belong to the category of small farmers, who has land, which is barely enough to meet their needs.

(iii) Only 20 per cent of the farmers of India are large farmers who cultivate most of the land in the villages. A large part of their produce is sold in the market. Many of them have began other businesses such as shops, moneylending, trading, small factories, etc.

(iv) Apart from farming, many people are dependent upon collection from the forest, animal husbandry, dairy produce, fishing etc.

(v) In some villages in Central India, farming and collection from the forest, both are important source of additional income.

(vi) Likewise selling milk to the village cooperative society or taking milk to the nearby town may be an important source of livelihood for some families.

(vii) In the coastal areas of India, we see the fishing villages.

Coastal Areas:

(i) People in coastal areas live a difficult life.

(ii) Fishing is their main occupation. But when the fishermen are out, it is not known whether they will come back or not.

(iii) Fishermen are unsafe for four months during monsoon season. It is a lean period for the fishermen.

(iv) There is constant battle for survival among majority of people in rural areas.

Rural Livelihoods:

(i) The rural people earn their living in various ways. Some work on farms, while others earn their living on non- farm activities.

(ii) People are dependent upon the fields that they cultivate. Many depend on these fields for work as labourers. Most of the farmers grow crops both for their own requirements and also to sell in the market.

(iii) Some of the people have to sell the crops to the traders from whom they have borrowed money. For their survival, many families need to borrow money for their work and when no work is available.

(iv) Some families in rural areas have large acres of lands, business etc. But most of the small farmers are either agricultural labourers or fishing families or craft persons in the villages. They do not find enough work to keep them employed throughout the year.

Urban Livelihoods

India has as many as five thousand towns and nearly twenty-seven big cities.

- These big cities are also known as metropolis or simply as metros. They have a population of more than a million people each.
- The big cities are Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai and Kolkata. In these cities, more than a million people live and work.
- **Occupations:** There are three types of occupation: primary, secondary and tertiary. In primary occupation people are engaged in agriculture, in secondary occupation people are engaged in manufacturing and processing of raw material, in tertiary occupations they are engaged in providing services.
- **Types of Livelihoods:**
 - (i) In urban areas different types of people reside and they practice different types of livelihoods. People here have temporary as well as permanent structures of work.
 - (ii) On the streets here people work on their own. They are not employed by anyone and therefore have to organise their own work. They have their own plans as to how much to purchase, as well as where and how to set up their shops.
 - (iii) There some shops are temporary structures, sometimes just some boards or papers are spread over discarded boxes or a canvas sheet is hung up on a few poles. They may also use their own carts or simply spread a plastic sheet on the pavement.
 - (iv) The shops are sometimes dismantled by the police. So they have no security. Sometimes, in some parts of the cities, these hawkers are prohibited to enter.
 - (v) In cities vendors sell things that are most of the time prepared at home by their families who purchase, clean, sort and make them ready to sell. Street vending was till recently looked upon only as an obstruction to traffic and to people walking. The government is thinking

about modifying the law that banned the street vendors, so that they have places to work and there is free flow of traffic and people.

(vi) The factory workers here work hard day and night but are unable to get good salaries.

(vii) Shopkeepers and businessmen are busy in selling and buying of different types of things. In the market one can find a variety of shops. There are shops where sweets, toys, clothes, footwear, utensils, electronics etc. are sold. There are showrooms where readymade garments are sold.

(iv) Professionals like teachers, doctors, lawyers, etc. form the core of the urban population. They provide services.

(v) Some people practice other occupations. They can be vegetable vendors, domestic servants, garment traders, etc.

Businesspersons:

(i) There are several business persons in the market who manage their own shops. These shops may be small or large and they sell different things. Most businesspersons manage their own shops or businesses. They are not employed by anyone.

(ii) The businesspersons do employ a number of workers as supervisors and helpers. These are permanent shops that are given a licence to do business by the Municipal Corporation.

(iii) The Municipal Corporation also decides on which day of the week the market has to remain closed. For example, the shops in a market in Delhi are closed on Wednesdays.

(iv) There are complexes also having small offices and shops that provide services such as banks, courier services and others.

Factory-Workshop Area:

(i) A lot of people are seen sitting on railings or in groups at the crossing. They seem to be waiting for someone. The place is known as labour chowk. These are daily wage labourers who work as helpers to masons.

(ii) They usually lift loads or unload trucks in the market, dig at construction sites, pipelines and telephone cables and also build roads. There are thousands of such casual workers in the city.

Workers in the Factory:

- (i) Several people are engaged in factories such as government factories.
- (ii) A normal working day begins at 9 am and finishes only by 10 pm ,sometimes extends even later.
- (iii) Most of the employers are employed on what is known as the casual basis i.e.they are required to come as and when the employer needs them.
- (iv) They are employed when the employer gets large orders or during certain seasons.At other times of the year,they have to find some other work.
- (v) Jobs are not permanant in this factory.If the workers complain about their pay or working conditions,they are asked to leave.
- (vi) They have no job security or protection if there is ill-treatment.

In the Office Area:

- (i) There are people working in offices of different companies.They work as permanent worker of the company and gets a regular salary every month and expect their job to continue for a long period of time.
- (ii) Being a permanent worker,they also get benefits such as savings for old age,holidays,medical facilities etc.
- (iii) Most of the people in the city work in offices,factories and government departments where they are employed as regular and permanent workers.
- (iv) They get a regular salary,their work is clearly identified.They attend their office or factory regularly.Unlike casual workers,they will not be asked to leave if the factory does not have much work.
- (v) It is very interesting to know how the people of a city do so many different things.They probably have never met each other,but it is their work that ties them together and helps to make up a city life.