

ESW SEMINAR

IDENTIFYING THE 'FAMILY FARM': AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION ON THE CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

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Outline

- Introduction
- Summary of findings & Themes
- Analysis & Critiques
 - What makes the term *Family Farming distinct*?
- Conclusions
- Follow up: Defining the family farm
- Discussion

Introduction

- International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) 2014
- Literature Review
- Goal: Identify ESW's comparative advantage and potential contributions
- Why “Family Farms”?





FAO/RLC Definition

- FAO (2012) “... production by producers who, despite their great heterogeneity among countries and within countries, have the following key characteristics:
 - ▣ Limited access to land and capital resources;
 - ▣ Predominantly family labor is used with the head of the household participating directly in the production process; therefore; even when there is some division of labor, the head of the household does not just perform management responsibilities but is also a worker in the family unit;
 - ▣ Agriculture/forestry/aquaculture/fisheries is the main source of income for the family nucleus, which may be complemented with other non-farming activities undertaken inside or outside the family unit (services related to rural tourism, environmental benefits, small-scale production, small agribusinesses, casual jobs, etc.)”



Summary of findings

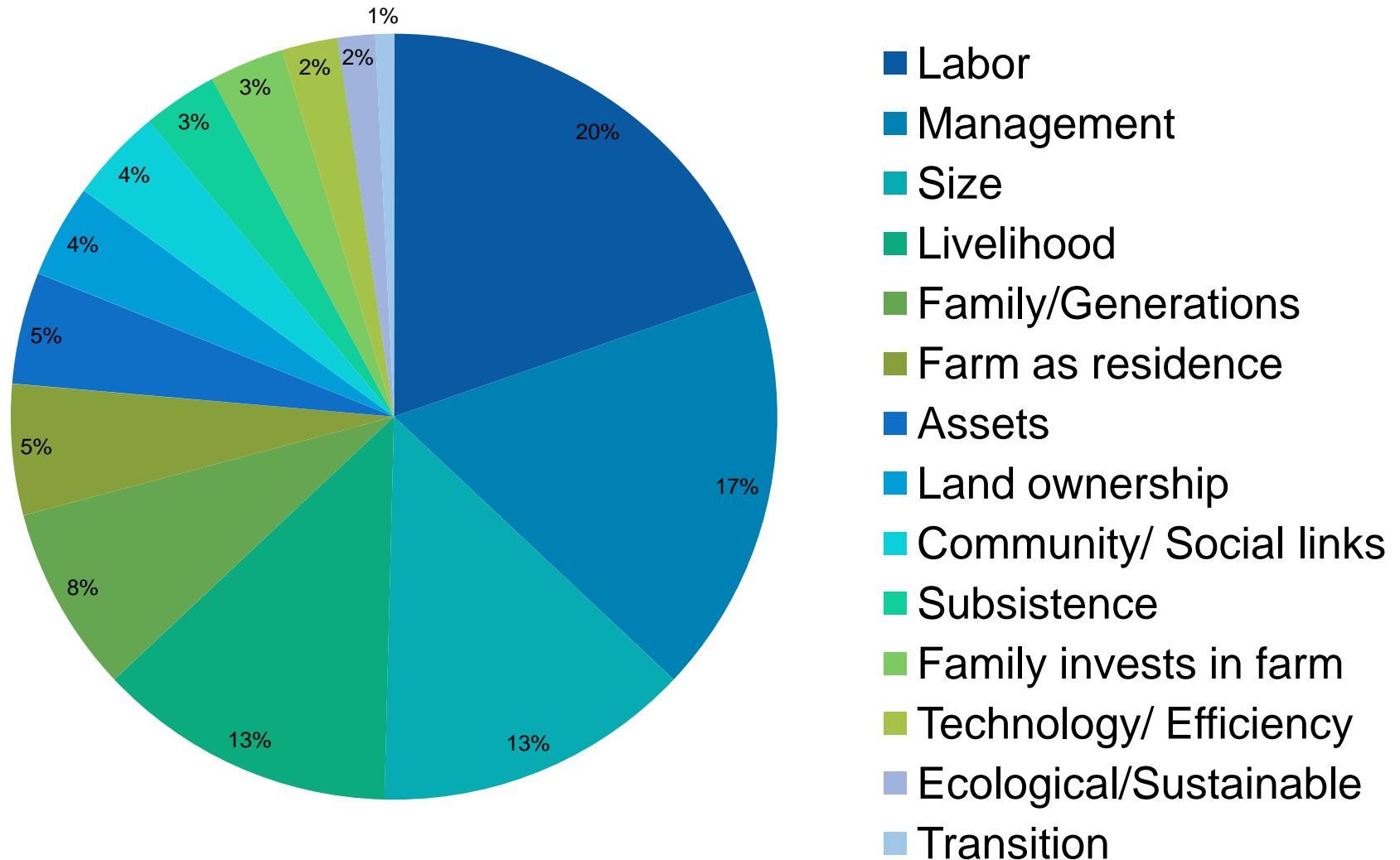
- **36 definitions** of family farming found to-date
- **Sources:**
 - 10 from Academic research;
 - 10 from Government policies or programs;
 - 13 from NGO publications/documents
- 23 developing world; 13 to western/developed countries
- 3.5 characteristics, average, min. 1 – max. 6
- Most common:
 - Family as labor
 - Household as management
 - Size of farm (land and/or production)



Gasson and Errington (1993)

- (1) Labor:** Family members including business principals do farm work
- (2) Management:** Business ownership is combined with managerial control in the hands of business principals
- (3) Residence:** The family lives on the farm
- (4a) Family:** These principals are related by kinship or marriage
- (4b) Generation:** Business ownership and managerial control are transferred between the generations with the passage of time
- (5) Invest:** Family members (including these business principals) provide capital to the business

Themes among the definitions





Djurfeldt (1996)

- (1) The notional family farm is characterised by an overlapping between three functional units:
- ▣ the unit of production (i.e., the farm)
 - ▣ the unit of consumption (i.e., the household) and
 - ▣ the unit of kinship (i.e., the family).
- (2) For its reproduction, the notional family farm requires family labour, i.e., labour performed by members of the family/household, (and here we are not referring mainly to managerial work).
- ▣ This implies that, if the farm no longer requires family labour for its reproduction, it is no longer a notional family farm, although it may still be a farm family business.

Analysis of Definitions

- “Developed” versus “Developing” worlds
- Do not distinguish from Smallholder Farmers
- Often absent:
 - Transitions in family farming operations
 - Accounting for family and generational aspects
 - Accounting for social aspects



What makes family farms distinct?



- Household members' participation in farming
- Generational impacts
- Knowledge, culture and community
- Environment & Natural Resources
- Sustainability in Rural Development

Gender Considerations

- Agricultural knowledge different according to gender roles in the farm
- Women and children as unpaid labor, hired labor tends to be male
- In the face of transition
 - ex: Women as managers when males absent
- Inheritance to males





Conclusions of literature review

- Families are crucial to understanding the family farm
- Cultural context, social relationships and community involvement
- Local knowledge
- Link to rural transformations

The RLC definition limitations

- Allow for the transitions in rural areas, within families and among family farms.
- Recognize the diversity among family farms
- Allow for the role of identity and culture



Future definition....

- Given these objectives:
 - ▣ Account for all types of agriculture production
 - ▣ Allow for cross –country and – context comparisons
 - ▣ Allow for family farming transitions
 - ▣ Consider intrahousehold dynamics and rural transformations



Thank you!

For questions and comments:

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For Discussion: Towards an FAO notion of Family Farming

- From your experience, what are the important characteristics of a family farm?
- How does a family farm differ from a smallholder farm? Should it be different or no?
- How can a definition best acknowledge the current and future rural transformations, and the role that family farms play in that framework?