Livelihoods, land and natural resources

Each household practices shifting cultivation, on average 1.5 acres per year. The average rotation is of three to four years for rice and pulses. They also produce tea, fruits like mango, oranges, avocado and banana, djenkol beans, ginger and poppy as source of cash income. Non-timber forest products like mushrooms, yams, bamboo shoots, orchids and herbs also contribute to their income. Livestock is very limited.

Land use includes shifting cultivation area (5000 acres), permanent farmlands (irrigated paddy terraces 150 ac, upland farms 100 ac for potato, paddy, pulses, 500 acres of tea gardens and fruit tree orchards). Forest lands include community forestry area (583 ac), watershed forest, firewood hedges. There are also religious lands, grazing lands...

Key findings

There is no landlessness in the village and the shifting cultivation land is divided equitably for farming. However, there is the concern that part of their shifting cultivation area has been classified as reserved forests by MOECAF. So this land could possibly be granted by government to businesses. The villagers did not apply for titles during the latest land registration process. The community does not wish for private land registration even on terraces because villagers believe that if someone gets private ownership for a terrace or tea garden, then other people may also ask for it and the whole community may lose all the other lands which are not put under private ownership (i.e. shifting cultivation land). The villagers wish to keep all the land under communal ownership, as even owners of private terraces feel their rights are secure within the community and do not need SLRD land titles for this. They would like to have such registration soon, as gold has recently been found nearby and the villagers fear losing their lands unless protected legally.