

# Livelihood and integration of indigenous people in natural forest management: case of Dak To State Forestry Company, Kon Tum, Vietnam

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## Introduction and Objectives

Most of the remnant natural forests in Vietnam are located in mountainous areas where indigenous communities reside. The majority of indigenous people are poor. They heavily depend on the forest for their subsistence and livelihood. Forests in Vietnam are state-owned assets assigned to various forest owners for management, such as the State Forest Enterprise, or the so-called State Forestry Company (SFC). The management of natural forests by SFCs is currently facing three main problems: low profitability, forest degradation, and conflict over land and forest use by locals.

This research investigates the importance of forests to the livelihood of locals, the levels of integration between the SFC and locals, and the perception of locals on forest management practices.

## Study Location

The case study of Dak To Forestry Company (Central Highlands, Vietnam; 14°43'09"-14°53'30" N, 107°43'50"-107°52'20" S). The research was carried out in Dak Ro Nga commune, Dak To district, Kon Tum province.



## Methodology

Sixty-two households from five villages which locate inside and nearby the Dak To State Forestry Company were surveyed. Key informants were also interviewed to gain an understanding of the local situation.

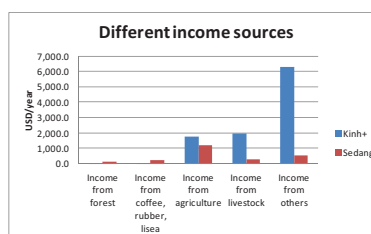
## Results and Discussions

Table 1. Description of Household Survey in Dak Ro Nga

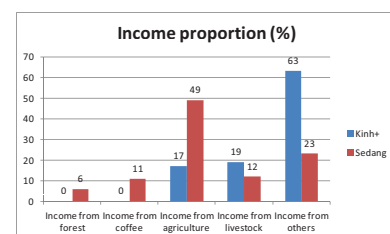
Description on average	Kinh+ (n=10)	%	Sedang (n=52)	%	Kinh vs. Sedang
Age of respondent	35.1		38.5		
Ethnic group of respondent	10	16.1	52	83.9	
Size of household	3.8		4.7		
Number of labors in household	2.2		2.2		
Total income 2011 (USD/year)	10,050.3	100.0	2,402.0	100.0	4.2
Total expenditure 2011 (USD/year)	8,616.1		1,877.2		4.6
Total owned land (ha)	2.9280	100.0	3.5070	100.0	0.8
Residential land (ha)	0.0310	1.1	0.0570	1.6	0.5
Home garden land (ha)	0.1250	4.3	0.2090	6.0	0.6
Cultivation land (ha)	1.9950	68.1	2.0090	57.3	1.0
Long-term trees land (ha)	0.7770	26.5	1.2330	35.2	0.6

Source: Household survey, 2012

Figure 1. Livelihood of local people

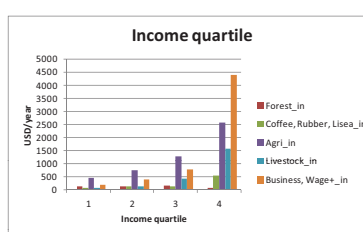


Source: Household survey, 2012

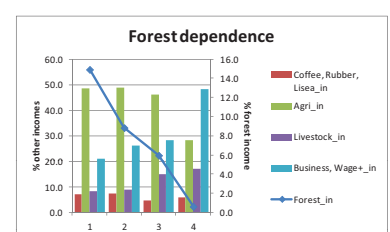


Source: Household survey, 2012

Figure 2. Income group quartile

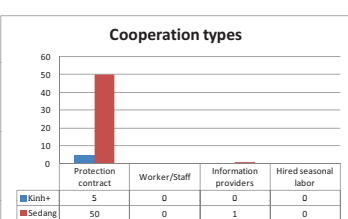


Source: Household survey, 2012

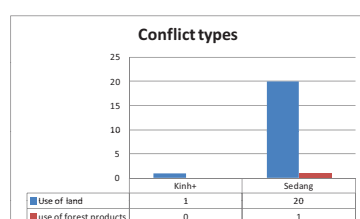


Source: Household survey, 2012

Figure 3. Cooperation and conflict with SFC



Source: Household survey, 2012



Source: Household survey, 2012

Table 2. ANOVA Test:

Forest dependence between groups	P-value
Income	0.000**
Ethnicity	0.000**

\*\* Significant at  $\alpha=0.01$  level

The research findings reveal that the income of the migrant group (Kinh and others) is 4.2 times higher than that of the indigenous group (Sedang). The main income source of the migrant group is from business and service (62.6%), while the indigenous group gets their income more from agriculture (mainly of Cassava, constituting 48.9%). By contrast, the indigenous and low income household groups have greater access to forest and depend on it as their source of income, accounting for 5.8% and 14.9% respectively. The migrant and the high income groups show almost no income from the forest, 0.4% and 0.6%. The difference in forest dependence is of high significance ( $p<0.000$ ). The SFC acts solely in planning forest management without the participation of locals. The total land owned is not much different, an indigenous household owns 1.2 times more than a migrant household. However, conflict over land is reported by 38.5% of the indigenous group members. Another field of conflicts is the lack of consideration of locals in operation planning and the lack of trust in the SFC's management ability.

## Recommendations

There should be a solution to solve conflicts by involving local people and communities in forest management planning process, forest protection agreement via contract, and benefit sharing. On the other hand, improvement of responsible forest management of the SFCs is a need to build trust and show good practice in public.

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