

Napier in Shifting and Sloping Land: Source of Family Income for "Sanu Kanchha"

Sanu Kanchha Gurung, 35, is a resident of Ampu Khaireni-9, Kharsang, Siran Tole, Tanahun District. He is a resource farmer and is involved in leasehold forestry project activities as an active lead farmer since 2007. He is also member of Navajagriti Farmer Coordination Group, a federation of leasehold groups. Sanu Kanchha is a poor and marginalized farmer with less than two ropanis of land. He has no regular source of income to support his family. He earns small amounts of cash from intermittent carpentry projects around his village and through sale of pulses grown on his farm. When the Napier project was launched in his community, he received different types of trainings, one of which was on-farm diversification. With this skill, he planted different varieties of fodder and forage species on his land (including shifting cultivation plots). He added thousands of Napier seedlings in hedgerows, terrace risers, and fallow areas of shifting cultivation land. Now he has produced many Napier grasses in his land. As a result, forage deficiency in his household is significantly reduced. His livestock numbers have also increased, especially his goats from 5 to 15. Sanu Kanchha claims that Napier grass is sufficient for three months for his livestock that number 20, including the goats, and it has helped save time that would otherwise be used to collect fodder and forage. He now uses the spare time on other activities, he says. Moreover, due to the fast growth rate of the species and its rooting habits, Napier grass has also helped control soil erosion in his shifting land. Most significantly, he earned Rs 10,000 this season from Napier seedlings by supplying it to the local community. Nowadays, he facilitates plantation of Napier and other forage and fodder species among his neighbours. Farmers of the adjoining community are highly impressed by his hard work. His work is a model and adjoining families are now prepared to plant Napier grasses and other fodder and forage species in their homesteads and shifting lands.