

A Journey of Research and Development: Insights of Life Long Experience of Conducting German-led Project in Thailand

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1974 - 1979: Study Agricultural Economics, University of Hohenheim

1979 – 1980: DAAD Scholar in the Philippines

1980 – 1982: GIZ Project in the Philippines

1982 – 1984: Doctoral Dissertation at University of Hohenheim

1984 – 1988: GIZ Project at Ministry of Agriculture, Thailand

1988 – 1991: Associate Professor, Asian Institute of Technology

1991 – 1994: Lehrstuhlvertreter, Instit. f. Agrarökonomie, Uni Göttingen

1994 – 2001: Prof. of Hort. Economics, Leibniz University Hannover

2001 – 2023: Prof. of Development. and Agric. Economics, LUH

01.04.2023: Retirement (“Professor a. D.”)

01.10.2024: Student of History Sciences at the University of Passau

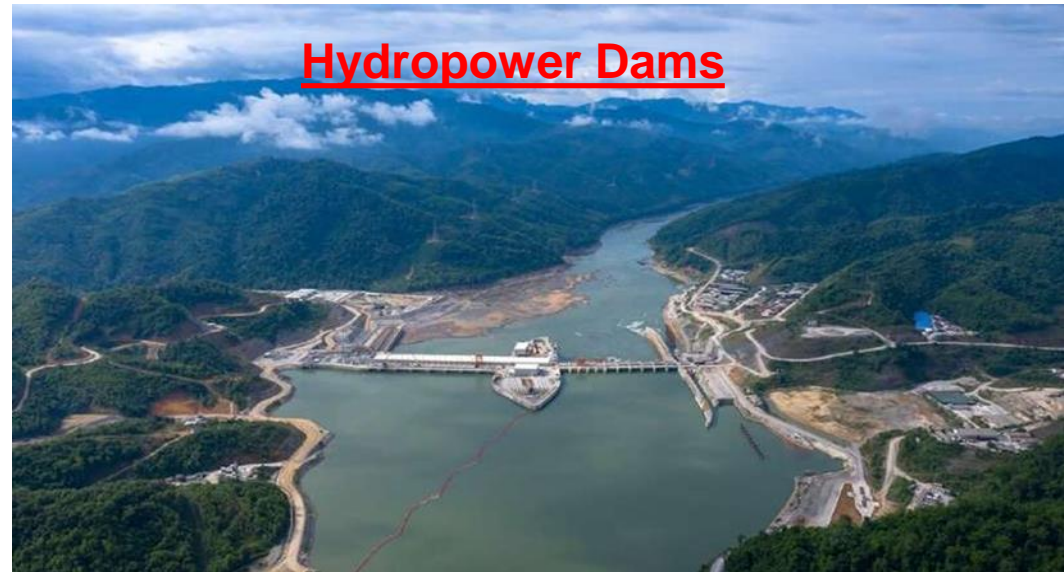
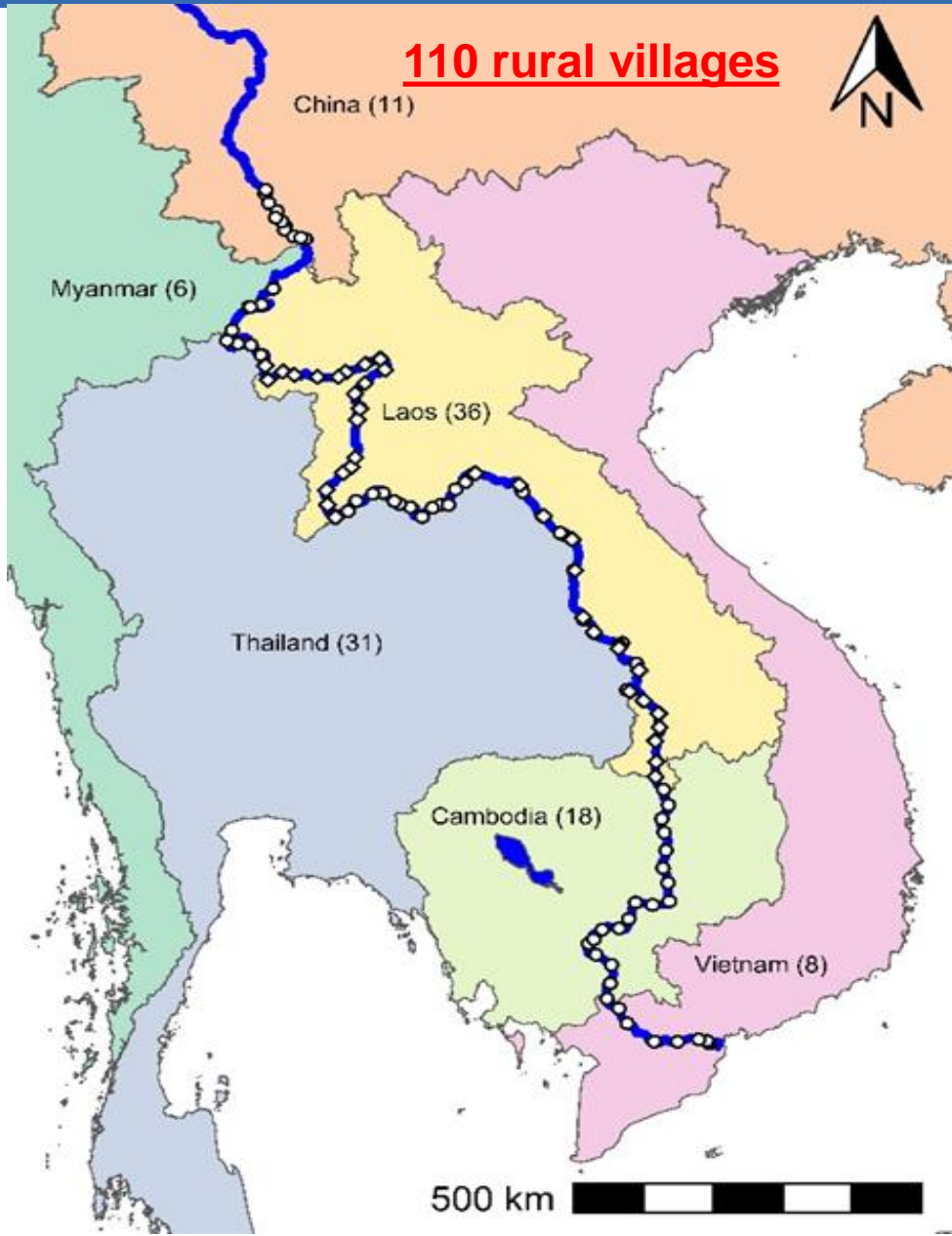
Herman Waibel: a “Farmer-Biker-Professor”



My „five“ decades in Thailand

Decade	Period	Decade Title	Main Partners
I	1983 - 1990	Thai Government	Department of Agriculture (DOA) & Department of Agricultural Extension (DOAE)/ Asian Institute of Technology (AIT)
II	1991 - 2000	Pesticide Policy Project	Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI) & Kasetsart University (KU)
III	2001 - 2010	DFG-Vulnerability to Poverty Project (DFG-FOR-715)	Kasetsart University (KU) & regional Universities in three provinces in NE-Thailand
IV	2011 - 2020	DFG-Thailand Vietnam Socioeconomic Panel (TVSEP)	Ubon Ratchathani University & other regional Universities
V	2021 - now	Mekong River Village Project	Ramkhamhaeng University & researchers from all six Mekong countries

Fifth Decade - Mekong River Village Project



The Mekong Research Team



My „Pu Juai“ Khun Suputra



The Mekong Naka

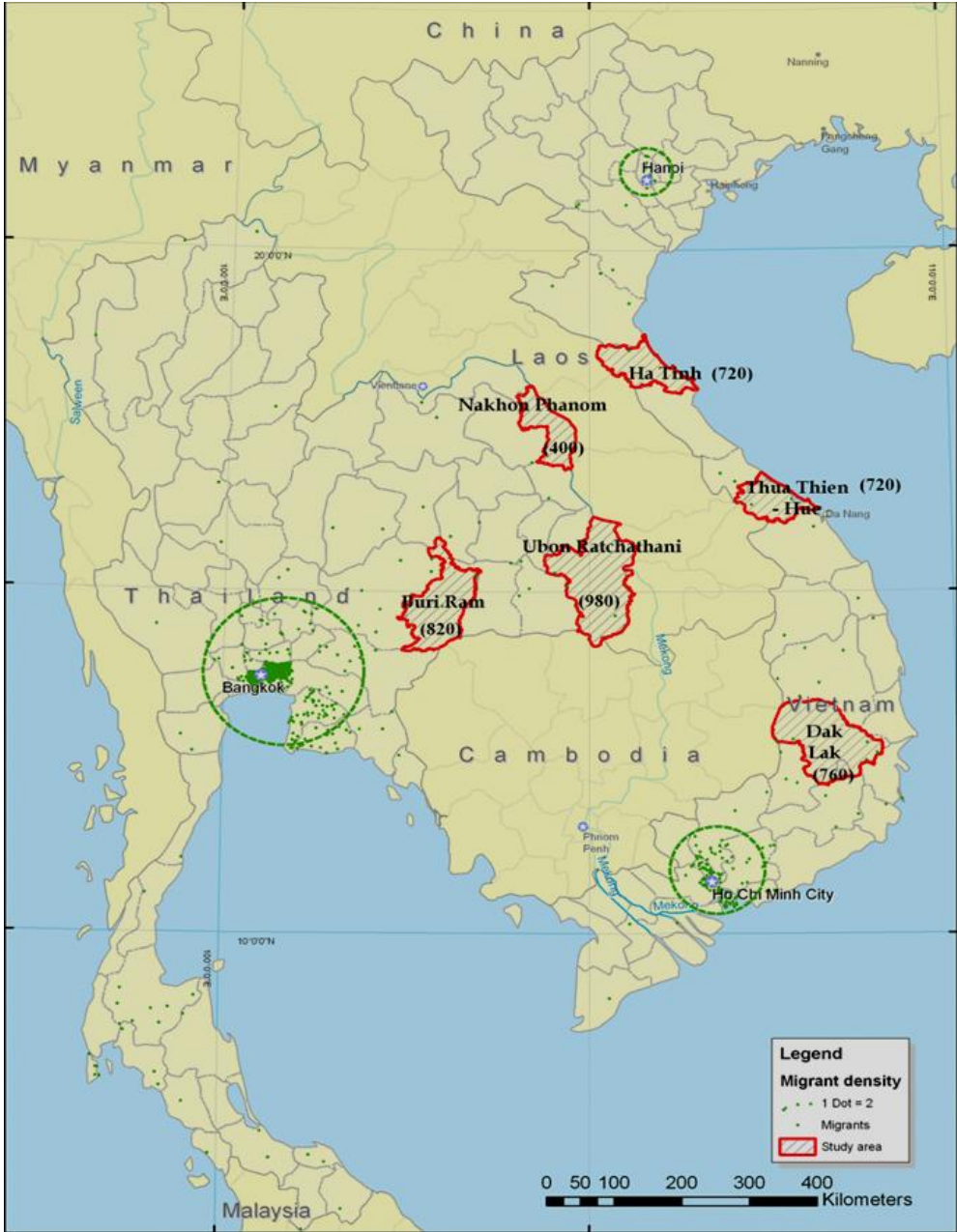


„Come to my River“, said the Naka.....



- 1) A Research Conference in 2025
- 2) A Book publication with all research partners as co-authors
- 3) An illustrated village story Book (English & Asian languages)
- 4) Cost-Benefit-Analysis of Sand Extraction in the Mekong River in Thailand
- 5) Paper publications
- 6) A documentary Film: “A hundred Mekong Villages” (**Suputra**)
- 7) A Data base for follow-up projects by other researchers

Fourth Decade: DFG-TVSEP



Enumerator Training with my National TVSEP Manager Dr. Nat from Mahidol



Inauguration of TVSEP office at Ubon

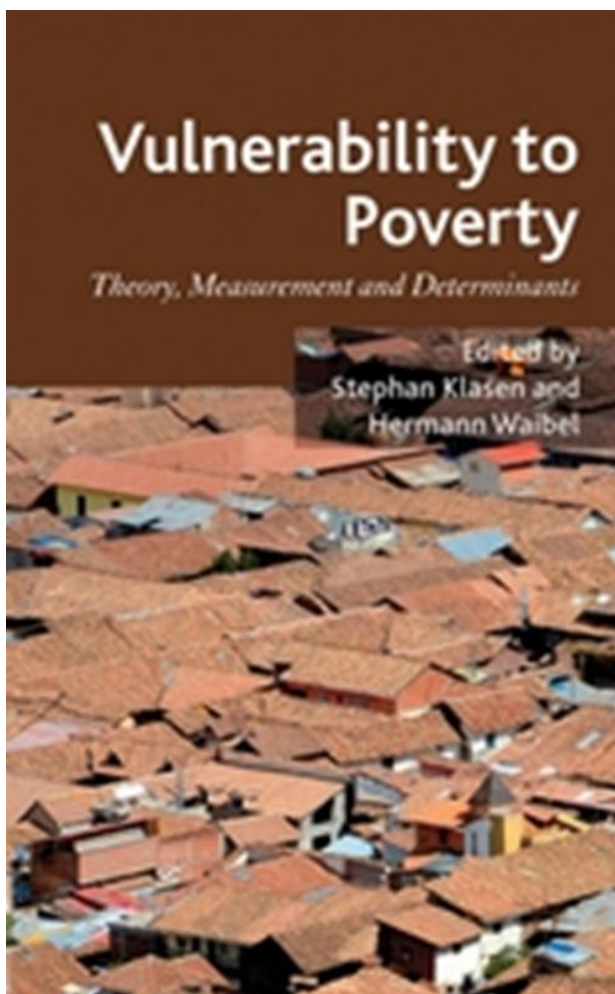


Supervising Student Enumerator Teams – my „dek dek“-

11
102
1004

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Hannover





1. Self-assessment of general risk attitude:

“Are you generally a person who is fully prepared to take risks or do you try to avoid taking risks?”

Response scale 0 – 10

0 meaning “not at all willing to take risks”

10 meaning “fully prepared to take risks”

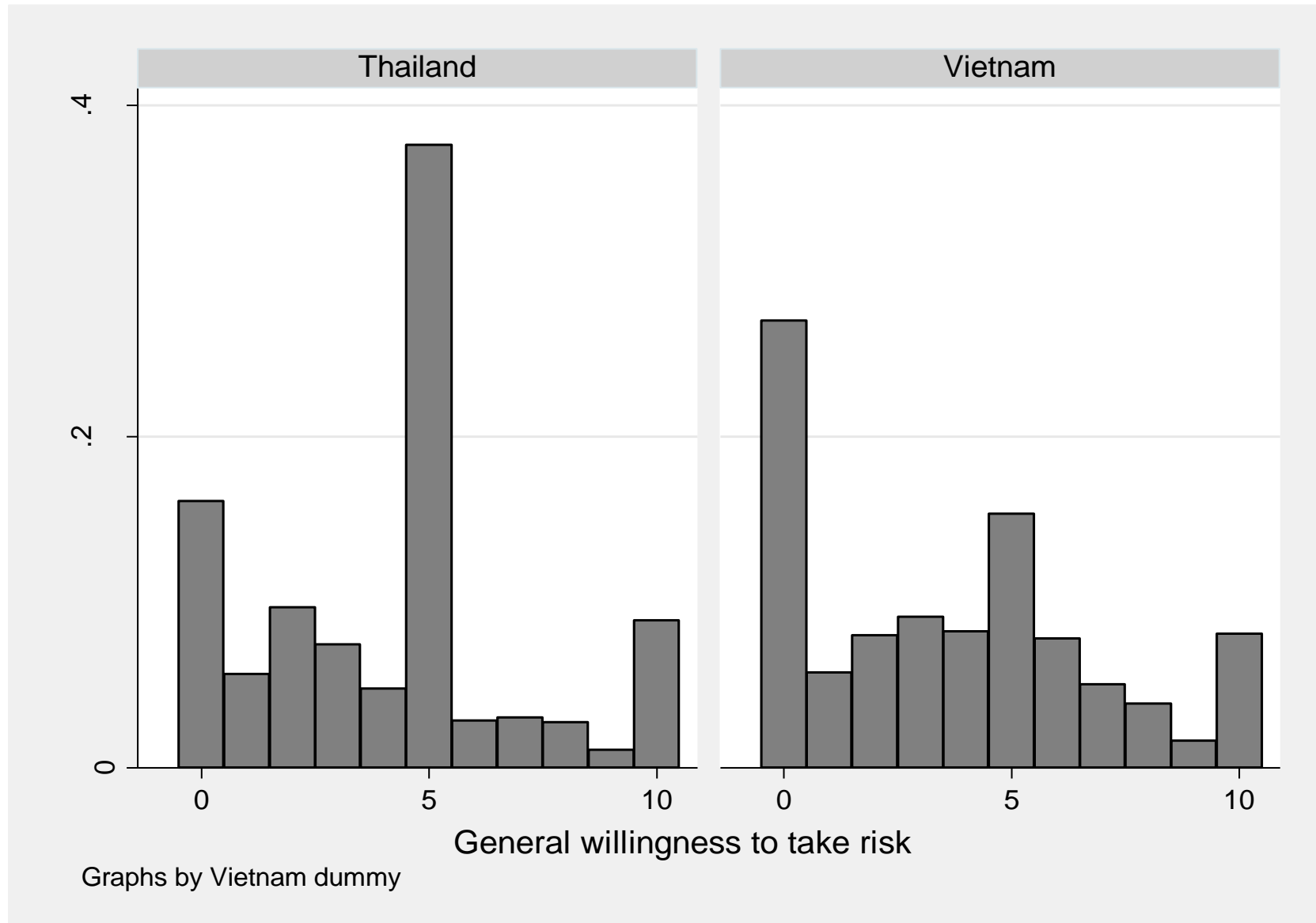
2. Hypothetical investment Question

“Imagine you had just won 100,000 Baht in a lottery and you can invest this money in a business. You are not sure if the business goes well or not. If it goes well you can double the amount invested after one year. If it does not go well you will lose half the amount you invested. What fraction of the 100,000 Baht would you invest in the business?”

3. Experimental elicitation of risk attitude: risk games with real pay-offs

4. Behavioural indicators, e.g. Purchase of lotteries

Results: Survey-based risk attitudes



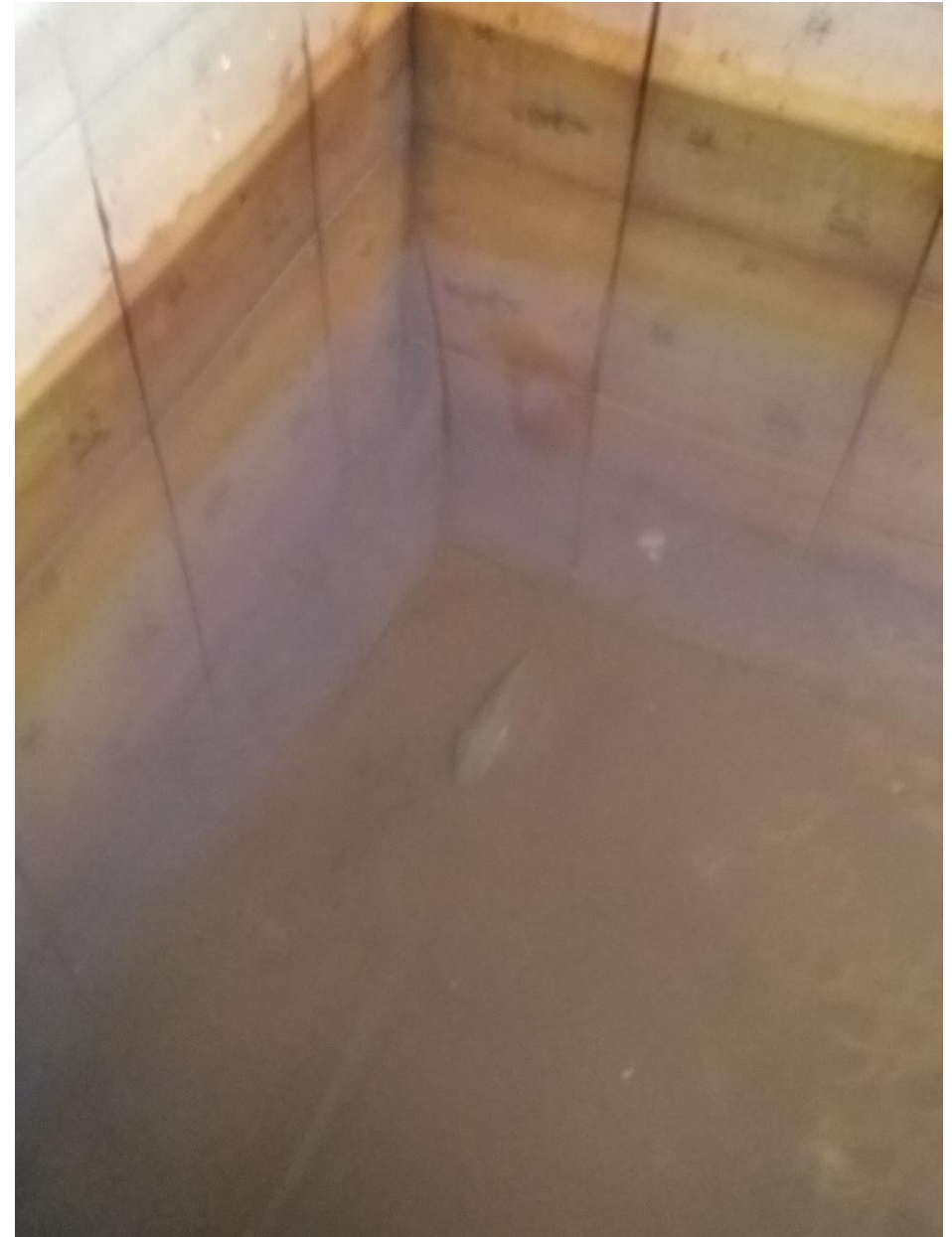
- GIZ-sponsored Pesticide Policy Project in four countries: Zimbabwe, Côte d'Ivoire, Costa Rica and Thailand
- Chemical Pesticides are over- and misused in World Agriculture
- In Thailand pesticides are heavily subsidized, e.g. through import tax exemptions, preferential exchange rates, lax registration procedures, lack of occupational health protection/prevention, etc.
- Frauke Jungbluth (now a Director at the World Bank) did her PhD research and found external costs to reach up to 5.5 billion THB during the nineties.
- For every THB spend on chemical pesticides add another THB for externalities!
- Pesticide Use clearly above the optimal societal level
- Joint Policy Workshop with TDRI, Thai Government Agencies and FAO.

- Over-and misuse of pesticides in Thai Agriculture
- The pest outbreak budget of 10 million USD annually was in effect a pesticide subsidy
- GIZ Project on Surveillance and Early Warning for Pests in Rice
- GIZ project to develop a more efficient integrated pest management system based on scientifically valid intervention thresholds.
- Project requires high investments in mobility of surveillance staff and communication equipment.
- Project was politically highly sensitive due to vested interests
- After I had joined AIT by mid 1988, I could publish a paper on the pesticide subsidy system in Thai agriculture
- Started a project on pesticide-free vegetables and AIT students sold them at Sunday Market.

....got to know the real world in Thailand..



Bike to a village and take bath in a village house



1) The things that did **not** change:

- Rural bias
- Average Farm Size
- School education system
- English language skills (getting worse)
- Top-down system: „*always work for someone, never for something*“
- Superstitions: „*buy lottery according to the number you dream*“

2) The things that **did** change:

- Wealth in the villages
- Farming gets more mechanized
- Better transportation possibilities (*pick-up and cars*)
- Farm diversification
- Life expectancy
- Openness

Khob Khun Krub

