

THESIS TITLE A STUDY OF CHANGES OF COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEM AFTER
WATER POLLUTION CRISIS IN NAM PHONG RIVER : A CASE
OF BEUNG KLANG VILLAGE, AUMPHER NAM PHONG, CHANGWAT
KHON KAEN.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the change of community food system and its effect on socio - economic status of the community after the water pollution crisis the Nam Phong river in 1992 Ban Beung Klang, Nam Phong subdistrict, Nam Phong district, Khon Kaen, which is situated on Nam Phong riverside was selected, as a study site. The qualitative data were collected by means of indept interviews using interview guide and participant observations. Thus, the reseacher stayed in the community for 90 days for data collection.

The results of data analysis indicated that community food system was changed after the water pollution crisis. The community consumed more ready-made food and vetgetable than fish. Instead of fishing in the Nam Phong river, they purchased food from market and relied on other natural food resources, i.e. vetgetable. They also had changed methods of fishing from using

cast nets and ring nets to long-hand fishing nets and merhs. Since the Nam Phong river was a rich natural food resources for long time and there had no other resources nearby, the community still had to fish there. Although the distance for fishing were not changed, it took about 2-3 times longer for the villagers to fish. Men used to play a major role in food collection. However, after the crisis its trend was decreasing. Types of food now have changed to be more ready cooked, freshwater prawns, crabs, shells, snails and insects which were collected by women. Food distribution was also affected. They could find food just enough for consumption. Sharing was decreasing while selling vegetable which was agricultural products was increasing. They had obvious effects on economics. The villagers used to rely on natural food for 3-5 days a week. Now they collect natural food for only 1-3 days a week. The amount of money paying for food from the market was increased from 30 baht to 40 baht a day. Decreasing in natural food consumption was indicated by the decrease of food sharing and group fishing. It was also found that relationship and cooperation within community were more likely to decline. For the natural resources management, it was found that the community participated in rules and regulations set up for other natural resources found in the community except the Nam Phong river. They had misconception that Nam Phong river dose not belong to them since other communities also use it. Therefore, they just made use it and gained benefit from fishing which was practiced without the awareness of conservation. Role of natural resources rehabilitation and development was not taken by the villagers. This was because the villagers lack of knowledge and support from government sector.