

# Speaking of Health

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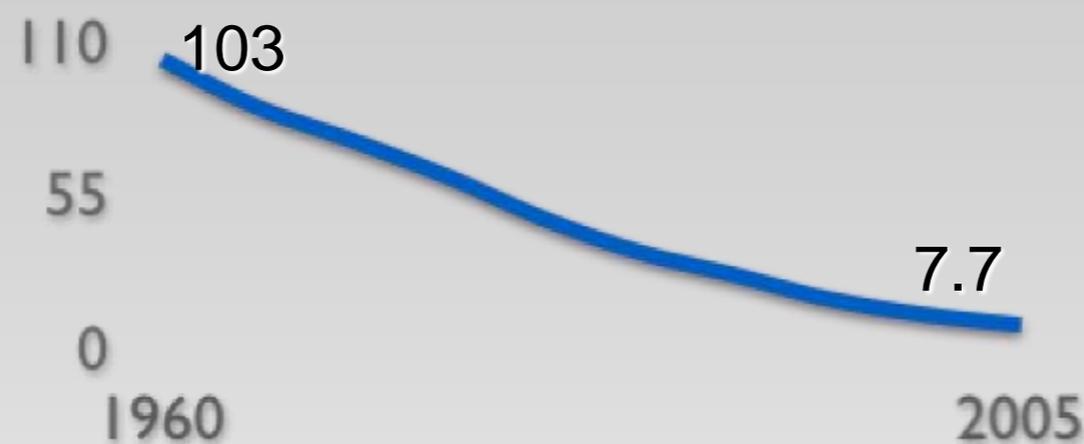
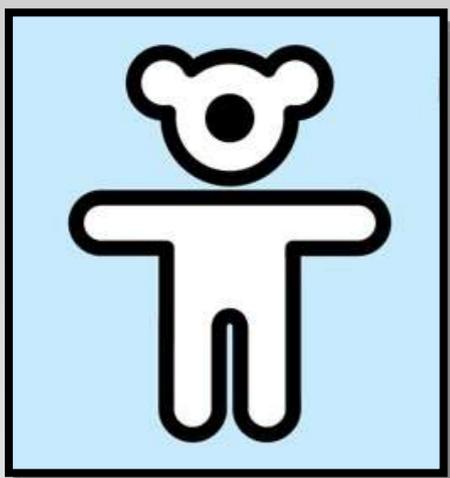
Tracing Language, Culture & Citizenship  
in Health Outcomes among Highland Ethnic  
Minorities in Northern Thailand



# Speaking of Health

**MDGs in Thailand  
Highland Context  
Our Research  
Findings**

# Thailand MDGs 4, 5 & 6



IMR

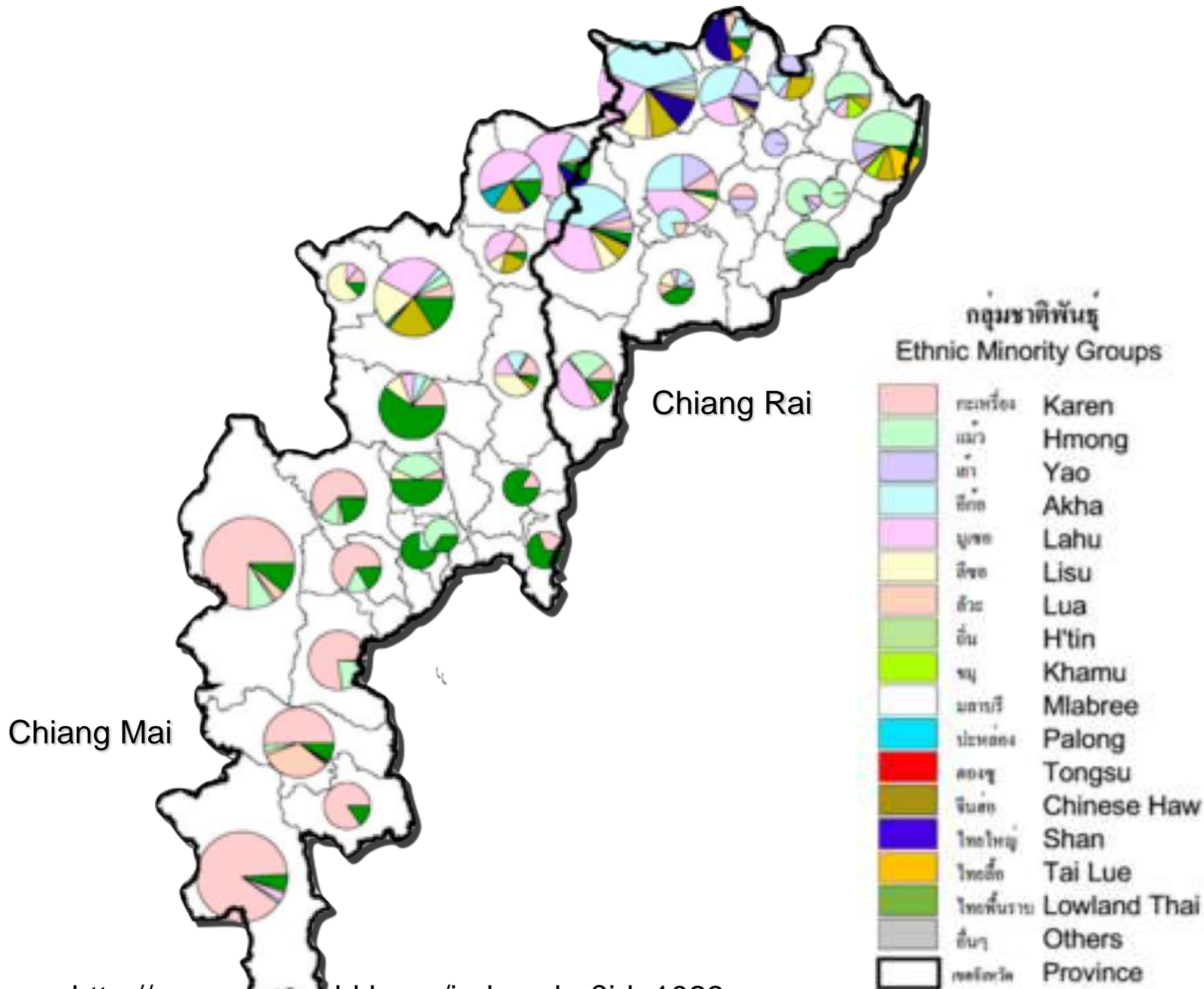


MMR

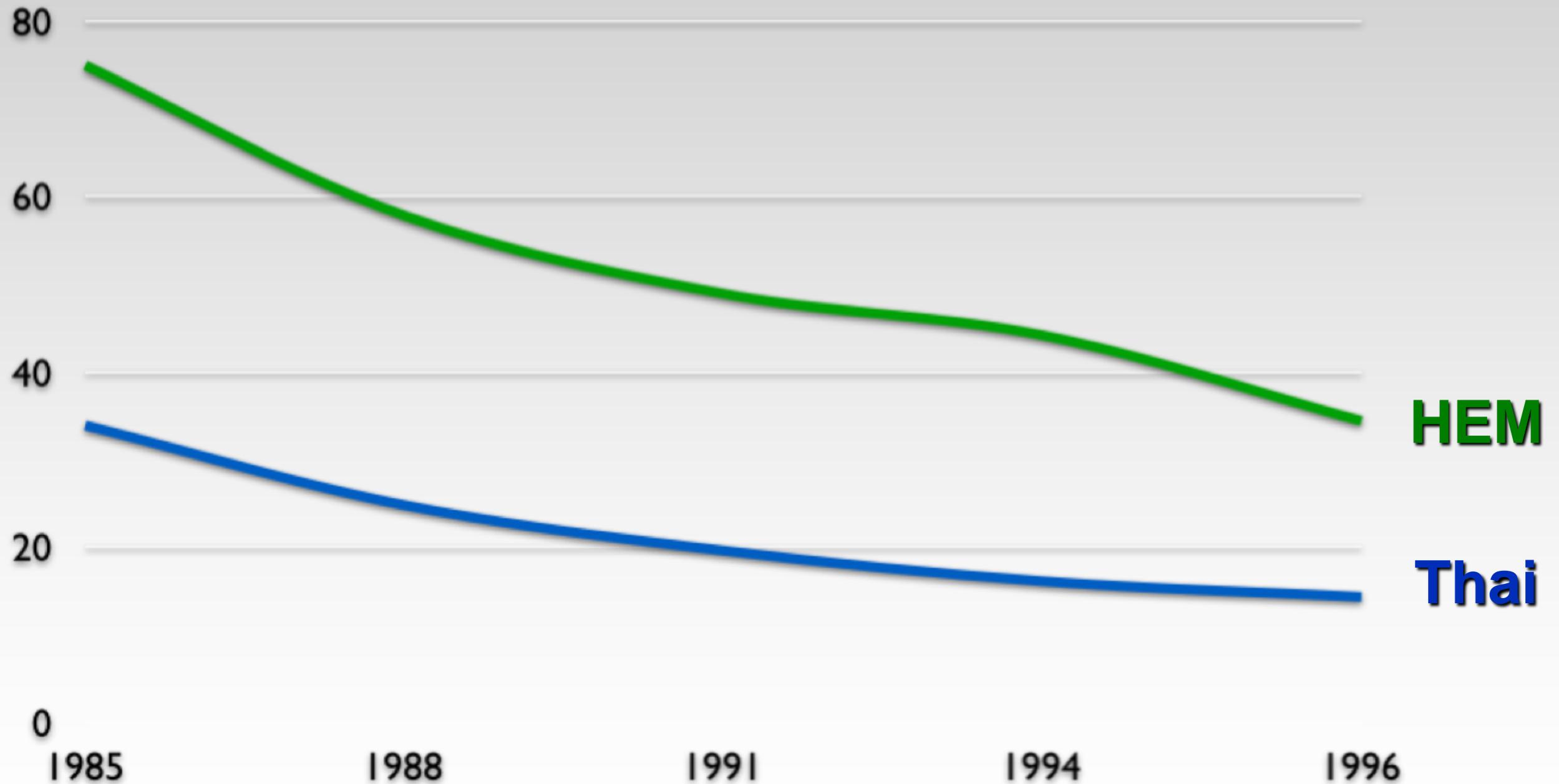


LE



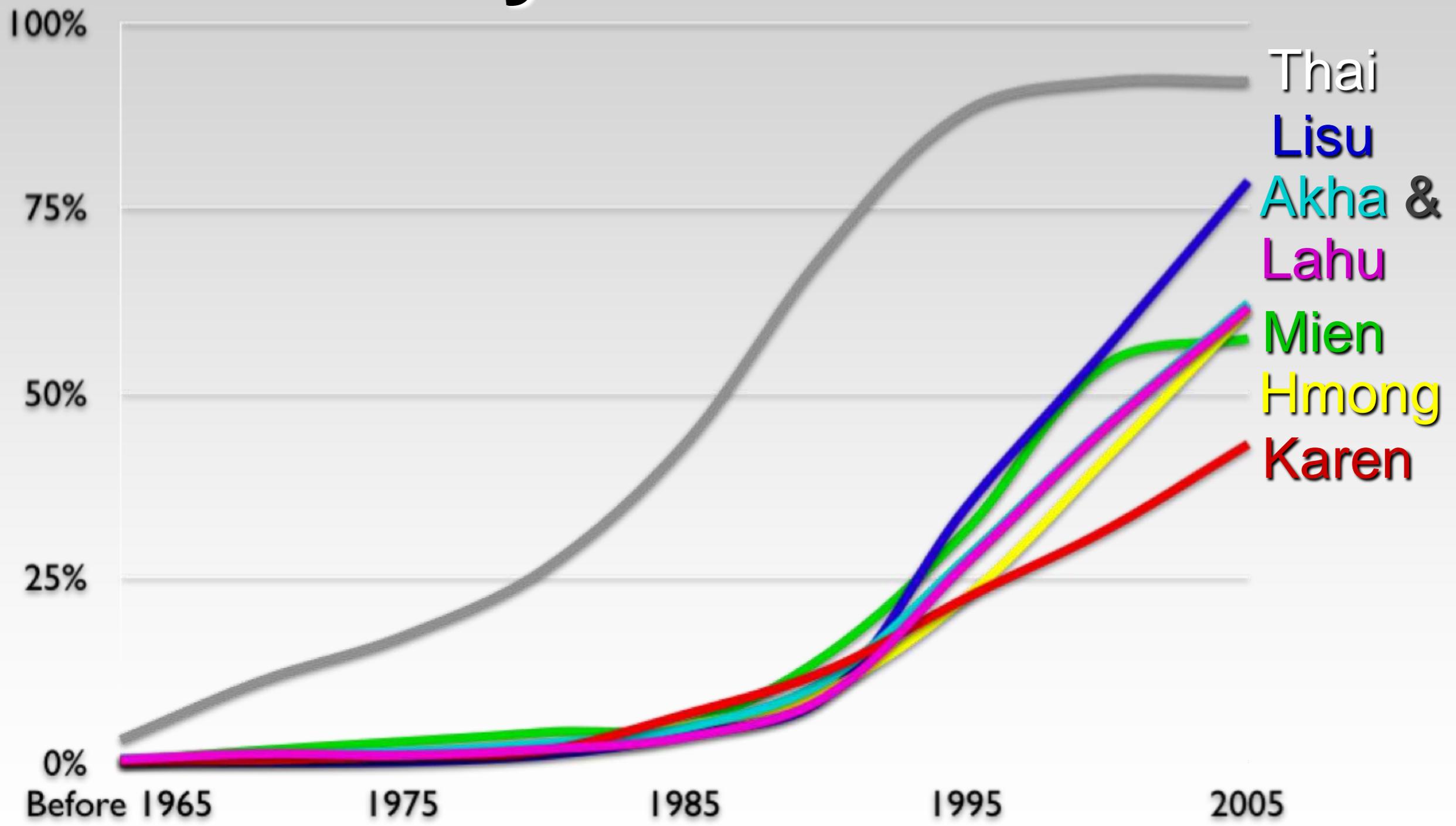


# Under-five mortality rates by *language*



(adapted from Sasiwongsaroj et al. 2008)

# Percent hospital births by ethnicity over time (n=47,172)



**What is the role of  
language in contributing  
to or mitigating health  
inequalities?**

# **Intensive Research**

Highland communities

Health & Education NGOs

Government officials

Healthcare workers

# Distance

Despite expansion of MOPH in highlands, distance to state health care facilities remains an issue & can vary extensively by village and over time. The health effects can vary by gender & health event.

# Access to Information I

Information about public health options--birthing, prenatal/postnatal care & HIV testing--is mostly in Thai and not accessible to most villagers.

# Access to information II

Can be greatly enhanced with village/NGO/MOPH partnerships. These appear to vary drastically by region and organization over time.

# Communication with health workers I

Village Health Volunteers seen as positive linkage between state and village, but training, tenure, and support vary from place to place.

# Communication with health workers II

No systematic training of or support for translators in local hospitals. Services such as these appear to vary extensively by region and over time. Effects vary by age, gender & across health issue.

# **Traditional V. Modern Health Care?**

Health priorities and programs designed within the modern health care system often create a false binary with traditional forms of health care. We believe this can have negative implications, not only for cultural diversity, but for quality of psycho-social and emotional health.

# **International Agendas, Local Needs**

Goals concentrate on international development indicators and national priorities, including those of the MDGS. These priorities, which are geared toward quantifiable outcomes are privileged over local priorities or local needs.

# Citizenship

Access to health care



**Thank you.**