

Vietnam, Dong Mai: \$20 per person ends dangerous lead poisoning of an entire village

At one time the people of Dong Mai were artisans, but in recent decades they turned to battery recycling and small-scale lead smelting to survive. Dong Mai's 2,600 villagers paid a heavy price for this toxic work with high levels of respiratory diseases, and mental illness in the community. Thanks to a technical collaboration and a targeted clean up, the situation is rapidly beginning to turn around. Levels of lead in the villagers have dropped by 30% for an investment of just \$20 a person.

Location	Dong Mai, Vietnam
Pollutant	Lead
Source	Dismantling lead acid batteries to extract the lead; and smelting the lead for resell
Population affected	2,600
Health and environmental impacts	Population inhaling and ingesting lead dust from the dismantled batteries and smelting; Lead contamination in the soil and water
Intervention	Capping of residential soils; Home and yard cleanup/remediation
Outcome	30% decline in blood lead levels in the local population within 6 months
Co-benefits	Increased awareness of health impacts of lead poisoning and how to reduce exposure; nearby commercial lead smelting operation adopted safer practices at the work place.