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## **Lead Exposure Costs Indonesia US\$ 37.8 billion Annually**

*Annual Worldwide Lead Exposure Costs are 7 Times Amount Low- and Middle-Income Countries Receive in Development Assistance*

**Denpasar** - A new interactive map shows that lead exposure costs Indonesia US\$ 37.8 billion annually. This cost exceeds the amount Indonesia receives in development aid annually (US\$ 150 million -- Ministry of Finance, Republic of Indonesia, APBN 2016). *Economic Costs of Childhood Lead Exposure in Low-and Middle-Income Countries* was developed by New York University School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics (NYU) and released today at the United Nations Environment Assembly meeting being held in Nairobi, Kenya. It can be accessed at: <http://nyulmc.org/pediatricleadexposure>.

“Children’s developing brains are permanently harmed by exposure to lead. One key impact is reduction in IQ score, which is correlated with decreases in lifetime earning potential. For the nation as a whole population-wide reductions in IQ means greater social costs and reduced intellectual capital, and other factors that adversely impact Indonesia’s economy, as the NYU map clearly shows,” said Yuyun Ismawati, BaliFokus.

According to the World Health Organization, "There is no known safe blood lead concentration." When a young child is exposed to lead, the harm to her or his nervous system makes it more likely that the child will have difficulties in school and engage in impulsive and violent behaviour. Lead exposure in young children is also linked to increased rates of hyperactivity, inattentiveness, failure to graduate from high school, conduct disorder, juvenile delinquency, drug use, and incarceration.

- Page one -

According to the NYU researchers: “One of the most important things we can do to decrease children's exposure to lead in LMICs (low- and middle-income countries) is to ensure lead is no longer used in household paint and other paints to which children may be exposed (such as paints on playground equipment).”

BaliFokus is a partner organization in IPEN's Global Lead Paint Elimination Campaign (<http://ipen.org/projects/eliminating-lead-paint>).

In 2013 and 2015 BaliFokus released the National Report on Lead in Indonesia's New Enamel Household Paints, that analysed the lead content in paints sold in national markets in Indonesia. That study found 77% up to 83% of enamel decorative paint samples tested contained lead above 90 ppm. 90 ppm is the maximum allowed lead content in many highly industrialised countries. By the end of 2014, the National Standardisation Agency, or *Badan Standarisasi Nasional* (BSN), issued a new voluntary national standard, SNI 8011:2014, that limits the content of lead in enamel-decorative paints produced in Indonesia to 600 ppm or lower. Of the 121 paints analysed in the 2013 and 2015 study, 61% and 78% of the paints contained lead above 600 ppm respectively.

“The research and the map released today clearly demonstrate that lead exposure greatly erodes the gains from development aid and that sustainable development will be severely hindered as long as childhood exposure to lead continues,” said Yuyun Ismawati, BaliFokus Foundation.

Worldwide the cost of lead exposure, according to the NYU research, is \$977 billion international dollars with economic losses equal to:

- \$134.7 billion in Africa (4.03% of gross domestic product (GDP) in that region),
- \$142.3 billion in Latin America and the Caribbean (2.04% of GDP in that region), and
- \$699.9 billion in Asia (1.88% of GDP in that region).

To prepare the interactive map, researchers assessed the neurodevelopmental impacts of lead, assessed as decrements (or reductions) in intelligence quotient (IQ) points caused by lead and how those reductions translated into decreases in lifetime earning potential, assessed as lost lifetime economic productivity (LEP) in each country examined.

Additional comparison information to developed countries and to official development assistance (ODAs) dollars is also provided, along with links to the full report and supplemental information.

[BaliFokus](#) is a non-governmental organisation working to improve community's capacity, quality of life and advocating a toxics-free environment together with all stakeholders in sustainable way.

IPEN is a network of non-government organisations working in more than 100 countries to reduce and eliminate the harm to human health and the environment from toxic chemicals.

[IPEN](#) is a member of the Advisory Group of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint ([GAELP](#)), which seeks the elimination of lead in paint by 2020.

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