

## Cameroon battery recycling

The results of the research titled "Study on soil contamination in lead-acid battery recycling factories in Douala, Cameroon" revealed that soil contamination levels inside the three factories rose up to 7.6%, near fences 15% and more than 2% in factories.

Lead battery recycling is an extremely hazardous industry that receives little attention in Cameroon and other African countries. The objective of this study is to evaluate potential lead soil contamination in and around licensed lead battery recycling plants in Cameroon which are all located within Douala city limits.

We conducted a study around lead battery recycling plants in Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania and Tunisia. Our results showed significant lead contamination around 15...

November 8, 2023: Inadequate pollution controls and extensive lead contamination has been discovered at three licensed lead battery recycling plants in Cameroon, according to a study released on November 7.

countries could refine materials for lithium battery production and export to the US and EU. Refining could be in countries that are currently mining raw materials required for battery cell production or have a plan to start by 2030. These include: Cobalt: Cameroon, DRC, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Morocco, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe

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Whenever the sun sets, Agathe Ngo Nkot likes to relax at a place called Carrefour Bana, a corner of the Oyack district in the 3rd borough of the economic capital of Cameroon. Sitting near a speaker that vibrates urban music, she raises her voice to to speak to two women who are putting on makeup in front of the giant mirror of a hair salon.

Agathe, 41, has lived for two years about a hundred meters from the Bana crossroads. If she feels happy each time to return to this noisy place, it is not only to have fun with her loved ones. She takes advantage of the exchanges, she says, to forget for a moment the health concerns of Princess and Jules Merlin, her two young children who were born when she lived near the recycling plants for used lead acid batteries.

Agathe noticed when he was born that Jules Merlin was doing well, she says. Later, she discovered that her little boy, now three years old, still did not express himself. While those around her are still trying to understand the cause of this growth anomaly, Agathe gave birth six months ago to her last daughter, Princess, who contracted a lung infection. With this second hard blow, Agathe became afraid and left the Bana crossroads. She suspects factory fumes are responsible for her children's misfortunes.

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"I tell myself that this happened because of the smell of smoke coming from the industrial zone and entering the house," said Agathe, rocking Princess in her arms. "The smells came from the people who make the batteries."

Agathe is right to be worried. Without her knowledge, scientists recently took soil samples in and around the factories of Kyzen Global sarl, Metafrique Cameroun and Ganesha Cameroon, three companies specializing in the recycling of used lead batteries in the economic capital. After analysis, experts found that the communities near the factories where people live contain levels of "significant contamination" with lead which have negative effects on human health.

"The manufacturing and recycling of lead-acid batteries is an extremely dangerous industry," said Perry Gottesfeld, executive director of Occupational Knowledge International (OK International), a US-based NGO involved in analyzing the lead-acid battery samples and soils and uses innovative strategies to reduce exposure to industrial pollutants. "Because, these processes involve the smelting of lead, which releases airborne lead fumes that are easily absorbed," Gottesfeld added.

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