

**Presented at the International Nutritional Anemia Consultative Group (INACG),  
Peru, November 2004:**

**The efficacy of iron pots and steel pots in reducing prevalence of anaemia in  
Vietnam**

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**Background:** The use of cast iron cooking pots to increase the amount of iron in the diet and thereby reduce iron deficiency anaemia has been shown to be efficacious in studies in Ethiopia, Malawi and Brazil. While efficacious, cast iron pots have some undesirable characteristics, including slow to heat, prone to rusting and discolouring food, and being heavier than aluminium pots. Some types of steel pots have been shown in lab studies to leach iron into food, while having more favourable cooking characteristics than cast iron.

**Objective:** To evaluate the efficacy and acceptability of cast iron and blue steel cooking pots relative to a positive control of iron-fortified 'Sprinkles' for infants and iron tablets for adolescents and adults. **Methods:** Three communes were randomly assigned to each of the three study arms: cast iron pots, blue steel pots, positive control. Three target groups (women of reproductive age (15-43 years), adolescent girls (11-14 years) and infants (6-24 months) were screened at baseline by hemoglobin levels permitting selection of 15 or more anemic individuals in each target group in each study arm; serum ferritin and C-reactive protein were also measured. Iron pots and steel pots were distributed to households with at least one anemic individual, with guidelines to use the pot for cooking at least once per day. Monitoring visits took place every two weeks, collecting compliance, usage and morbidity data. A final monitoring visit was conducted and a blood sample was taken six months after the interventions were first distributed.

**Results:** The efficacy of the two types of pots in raising hemoglobin and reducing anaemia, relative to the positive control, will be determined.