

From Enemies to Partners
Vietnam, the U.S. and Agent Orange

About the Authors

Le Ke Son is a medical doctor with a Ph.D. in toxicology and led the government of Vietnam's efforts to find an equitable way forward on the Agent Orange legacy with the U.S. government. He first directed the Agent Orange Victims Fund at the Vietnam Red Cross and then moved to become the leader of the Office of the National Steering Committee for the Overcoming of the Consequences of Toxic Chemicals used by USA in the War in Vietnam (known as Committee 33), and concurrently, vice director general of the Vietnam Environmental Administration and Vietnamese co-chair of the United States-Vietnam Joint Advisory Committee.

Charles R. Bailey is a public policy specialist with a Ph.D. in agricultural economics. He was the Ford Foundation representative in Vietnam and headed the foundation's Hanoi office for a decade from 1997 to 2007. He then led the Ford Foundation's initiative on Agent Orange/dioxin from New York before moving the project to the Aspen Institute in 2011. Bailey has worked to mobilize attention and resources in the United States, assess progress on the ground in Vietnam and present independent findings and analysis through public reports, meetings with officials and convenings of key stakeholders.

Son and Bailey first crossed paths in December 2006 in Hanoi when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs recommended that the Ford Foundation work with Office of Committee 33. The two have collaborated over the ensuing years to push for a breakthrough on Agent Orange, a campaign that would ensure that Vietnam and the United States cooperate to address the problems left by American use of Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. Bailey and Son retired in June 2014 and decided to again join forces — this time to write the story of how the United States and Vietnam finally began to resolve one of the 20th century's iconic environmental and human disasters.

In writing *From Enemies to Partners* Son and Bailey have drawn on their firsthand experiences with Agent Orange and its legacy accumulated over the last two decades. They also interviewed nearly 40 other Americans and Vietnamese to unearth their insights on what has happened and the way ahead. Son's knowledge, credibility and access now enable him to conduct a thorough review of Agent Orange/dioxin issues in Vietnam. Bailey's long engagement with Agent Orange/dioxin and his familiarity with the key players on the U.S. side enable him to explore the U.S. perspective fully.