

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Asia Injury Prevention Foundation holds Stakeholder Consultative Meeting in Cambodia Regarding a Motorcycle Passenger Helmet Campaign

Phnom Penh, 19 August 2011- Asia Injury Prevention (AIP) Foundation, in close collaboration with the National Road Safety Committee (NRSC), the General Commissariat of National Police, Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) held a Stakeholder Consultative Meeting at the Imperial Garden Hotel. In 2010, 1,816 traffic fatalities occurred on Cambodian roads. 73% of motorbike accident fatalities suffered head injuries. Passengers are often the victims, yet no law exists which requires them to wear helmets. This meeting was held to discuss an effective action plan for a Motorcycle Passenger Helmet Campaign to be launched this October.

The consultative meeting brought together over 30 attendees from the NRSC, the Ministry of Interior, the MoEYS, other relevant ministries, IO/NGOs, and private sector companies. In accordance with Cambodia's support of the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020), AIP Foundation has been working as the country-level implementer of the Cambodian Helmet Vaccine Initiative (CHVI) since 2010, in an attempt to increase passenger helmet use in Cambodia. AIP Foundation will continue to collaborate closely with members of the Cambodian government to create and carry out Phase II of its 45-month life saving campaign, to advocate for passenger and child helmet use legislation and to increase helmet use rates among motorcycle passengers in target locations (Phnom Penh, Kampong Speu and Kandal).

"Helmets and seatbelts have been proven to save lives. We know what constitutes a 'road safety vaccine' that can make a real difference", said **Ms. Mirjam Sidik**, Executive Director of AIP Foundation. "It is our responsibility to work collaboratively with the relevant government bodies to pass this knowledge on to the public; to give them the tools to protect themselves, their families, and their communities."

According to data from CHVI's helmet use observations, passenger helmet use rates in Phnom Penh are extremely low, at 8 percent. Yet, helmets have been proven to reduce the likelihood of head trauma from road traffic crashes by 69 percent and the likelihood of death by 42 percent. The Motorcycle Passenger Helmet Campaign hopes to translate this knowledge into action - and obtain behavior change among motorcycle passengers.

"Today's meeting was called with the aim of spreading awareness about traffic fatality risk factors to all road users and especially to motorcycle passengers" said **H.E Peou Maly**, Deputy Secretary General of National Road Safety Committee. "The benefit of wearing a helmet is well described by the phrase, 'a helmet is the vaccine to protect your life', and it is an effective measure for reducing road traffic risks."

H.E Peou Maly, General Secretariat of the National Road Safety Committee, **H.E Lt. General Chan Kim Seng**, Director of the Central Department of Public Order, Ministry of Interior, and **Ms. Mirjam Sidik**, Executive Director of Asia Injury Prevention (AIP) Foundation, spoke and presented at the meeting, highlighting the importance of wearing a helmet to reduce the risk of crash fatalities and reaffirming the Cambodian government's commitment to improving road safety.

“I would like to request that all of those who have participated in this consultative meeting please support road safety activities and disseminate their knowledge to road users,” said **H.E Lt. General Chan Kim Seng**, Director of the Central Department of Public Order. “Additionally, all road users should follow the appeal made by Samdech Akka Moha Senapei Decho Hun Sen, delivered in May 2010, appealing to people of all ages to wear their helmets properly whenever they are aboard a motorbike, regardless of the time, the destination, or whether they are a driver or a passenger.”

About AIP Foundation

The Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (AIP Foundation) is a U.S. registered 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that uses public-private partnerships, public awareness education, and school-based programs to reduce the rate of traffic injuries and fatalities in developing countries. AIP Foundation has offices in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and Bangkok, Thailand. In 2001, AIP Foundation built its non-profit helmet assembly plant, V-SPEC, which manufactures Protec brand tropical helmets. These helmets offer an environmentally appropriate, safe and affordable option for motorbike and bicycle users.

In 2009, AIP Foundation, in collaboration with the FIA Foundation and the World Bank, launched the Global Helmet Vaccine Initiative (GHVI), an international coalition with the objective of “putting a helmet on every head in the ‘Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020).” In May 2010, H.E Mr. Im Sethy, Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, High Representative of Deputy Prime Minister H.E Mr. Sar Kheng, Minister of Interior launched the Cambodia Helmet Vaccine Initiative (CHVI) in Phnom Penh.

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