

VIETNAMESE HELMET LEGISLATION SAVES 15,000 LIVES AND \$3.5 BILLION IN FIRST DECADE: NEW REPORT

EMBARGOED UNTIL 01.00 GMT 15 DECEMBER

A Compulsory helmet law has saved thousands of lives and billions of dollars in Vietnam over the past decade, according to a report released today (15 December), demonstrating the impact additional road safety legislation could have on increasingly motorised countries across the South East Asia region.

HEAD FIRST: A case study on Vietnam's motorcycle helmet campaign, produced by the AIP Foundation and FIA Foundation, examines the swift motorisation of Vietnam, the decade-long campaign to secure the legislations, and the immediate and lasting impact – taking helmet use from 6% to almost 90% overnight.

The report follows swiftly on from announcement of new United Nations global road safety targets that aim to increase the proportion of motorcycle riders correctly using standard helmets to close to 100% by 2030. This target was designed, along with a number of other 'subtargets' to support the Sustainable Development Goals target to halve deaths and serious injuries on the world's roads by 2020.

According to the World Health Organization, road traffic injuries are the tenth leading cause of death globally, responsible for around 1.3 million deaths each year and as many as 50 million injuries. More than half of these fatalities occur in the Asia Pacific region with 34% of these deaths involving powered two-wheel vehicles. Research across the globe has identified that wearing a motorcycle helmet correctly can reduce the risk of death by almost 40% and the risk of severe injury by over 70%.

Despite overwhelming evidence that mandating the use of motorcycle helmets is the most effect way to lead to behavioural change, fewer than fifty countries have comprehensive legislation governing use and standards of motorcycle crash helmets. Without such laws, enforcement agencies are powerless to prevent hundreds of thousands of entirely preventable deaths and serious injuries.

This study will be a road map for other developing countries experiencing similar rapid motorisation and examining the cultural, economic and human impact of this ground-breaking legislation.

Saul Billingsley, Executive Director of the FIA Foundation, said: "Vietnam provides an important case study in government determination, sustained over the long term, to tackle motorcycle deaths and injuries. The country's very real success can be measured in tens of thousands of deaths prevented, hundreds of thousands of serious injuries avoided, and billions of dollars saved. The motorcycle helmet, with associated measures to ensure its effective use, is a public health vaccine that will pay for itself many times over. The Vietnam experience demonstrates how and why other countries must act, and with urgency."

Greig Craft, President of AIP Foundation said: “Vietnam’s story provides an example of what is possible when a dedicated government, NGOs, and public and private partners collaborate for a common objective. With concerted effort, strong political will, and the support of local and international partners at all levels, we can succeed.”

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Notes to editors

About AIP Foundation

AIP Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing road injuries and fatalities in low- and middle-income countries. Since 1999, AIP Foundation has been delivering effective road safety programs in locations across Asia and Africa. To find out more, visit www.aip-foundation.org or connect with us on Twitter @AIPFoundation.

About the FIA Foundation

The FIA Foundation is an independent UK registered charity which supports an international programme of activities promoting road safety, the environment and sustainable mobility. Our aim is to ensure ‘Safe, Clean, Fair and Green’ mobility for all, playing a part to ensure a sustainable future through:

- promoting research, disseminating the results of research and providing information in any matters of public interest which include road safety, automobile technology, the protection and preservation of human life and public health, transport and public mobility and the protection of the environment;
- and promoting improvement in the safety of motor sport, and of drivers, passengers, pedestrians and other road users which works globally to promote safe, clean fair and green mobility.

www.fiafoundation.org

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