



Johnson & Johnson improves road safety in central Vietnam, a region too often overlooked

April 9th, 2012- Quang Binh

Johnson & Johnson has committed 140,000 USD to running *Helmets for Kids* programs in Vietnam's Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, and Dong Nai Provinces. The helmet handover ceremonies took place in Quang Binh and Ha Tinh on April 9th and 12th and in Dong Nai on the 16th. In total, 8,800 helmets were donated to primary school students and teachers in 17 schools in central Vietnam, and 2,200 to three schools in Dong Nai. Combined, this makes up the largest school-based program ever implemented in Vietnam by the non-profit Asia Injury Prevention (AIP) Foundation.

While the majority of AIP Foundation's helmet donation programs have been run in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, this one is mainly focused on the central provinces. "Some of the country's major highways run through Ha Tinh, Quang Binh and Dong Nai, including National Highway 1A," said AIP Foundation's Executive Director, Mirjam Sidik. "This is a very dangerous environment for the students of many of our schools which are located along them. In addition, some of the rural schools we are working in do not have the capacity to accommodate students during lunch, and these students must use the road twice as often, thus doubling their risk of injury."

Mr. Than Van Thanh, Chief Secretariat of the National Traffic Safety Committee added, "Ha Tinh and Quang Binh do not receive much financial aid to supplement their limited road safety funds. We are very glad to see this project reach out to areas where help is most needed. In addition, the provincial Traffic Safety Committees and relevant local authorities are playing an exceptionally proactive role in its implementation. We highly appreciate the initiatives they have taken and their ownership of this project".

"Johnson & Johnson is committed to improving road safety around the world, particularly in the context of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety, and we are an active member of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration," said Sandra Lee, Director, Worldwide Fleet Safety at Johnson & Johnson. "Johnson & Johnson products have been part of the lives of Vietnamese families for a long time. Therefore, it made perfect sense for us to get involved in improving children's safety on Vietnamese roads."

According to the teachers in Ha Tinh and Quang Binh, the students in these central provinces could hardly contain their impatience for the helmets to arrive. And in Dong Nai, a teacher from Dinh Bo Linh School also revealed a compelling need for helmets. "Last year, one of my 5th grade students was not wearing a helmet on his bicycle, and he was killed when a motorcycle hit him," said Luong Thi Hong Nhung, the victim's former teacher. "This was very emotional and upsetting for the entire school; he is still very much a part of our thoughts. This donation comes at the right time because we understand its significance."

"In addition to helmets, this project provides teacher training on helmet use, and includes two road safety themed extracurricular activities organized throughout the year," said Mr. Duong Van Ba, Deputy Director, Department of Student Affairs of the Ministry of Education and Training. "These fun and educational activities will reinforce the safe road behaviors learned in class. We also believe parents to



be highly influential in this regard and thus appreciate that informational materials are being distributed to them.”

This *Helmets for Kids*’ first year of implementation will be fully monitored and evaluated so that its effectiveness can be assessed, and so that lessons can be documented for future improvements.

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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 during the ‘Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020).”

www.asiainjury.org.