



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sponsors *Helmets for Kids* at 2 schools in Kratie province in response to dire helmet wearing rate

February 24, 2012, Kratie Province

The Asia Injury Prevention (AIP) Foundation launched two *Helmets for Kids* programs at Sandann 1 and Bun Rany Hun Sen Phum Thom primary schools in Kratie province. The launch featured the symbolic handover of 520 helmets from the sponsor, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC) to the two primary schools' students and teachers, as well as student performances and speeches from key road safety stakeholders.

The schools are located along National Road 7, a highly dangerous, traffic dense road that puts students at great risk during their daily commutes to and from school. None of the students at the schools wear helmets, and only earlier this month a Grade 6 student narrowly escaped becoming a statistic when he was knocked off his bicycle and hit his head. He was lucky. Last year, 148 children in Cambodia were missing from their classrooms having been killed in road traffic accidents, and almost half of these deaths were caused by head injuries.

These low helmet wearing rates are endemic throughout Cambodia, with preliminary research showing that only 8 percent of passengers- including children- wear helmets. It is for this reason that the US CDC decided to step in with their support. "Injuries and deaths will be prevented as more children and adults use helmets while riding bicycle or motorbikes," said Ms. Dianne Syrvalin, US Foreign Service Officer of US Embassy in Cambodia. "The US CDC is committed to work in partnership with the AIP Foundation to collect information that will help us to evaluate the project. If successful, we hope more Cambodians will wear helmets."

In addition to the provision of helmets, *Helmets for Kids* provides basic road safety and helmet use education to students and teachers, and instructs parents on the importance of helmet use. "*Helmets for Kids* is a key component of the Cambodia Helmet Vaccine Initiative's efforts to increase helmet use among motorcycle passengers in target locations," said Mr. Kim Pagna, Cambodia Country Director of AIP Foundation. "Our ongoing 45 month Motorcycle Passenger Helmet Campaign will also feature television commercials, radio spots, billboards and community events to support the Cambodian government's commitment to the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020."

"In Cambodia, traffic crashes have increased noticeably and the high rate of death has created a very challenging problem," said Mr. Hoen Si Yem, Deputy Governor of Kratie province. "This catastrophe affects people in numerous ways, such as by destroying personal property, causing children to become orphans, leaving people spouseless or disabled and restricting the reach of the government policy on poverty reduction. Today, 520 people, including students and teachers at Sandan I and Bun Rany Hun Sen Phum Thom primary schools, have received helmets from the US CDC. This type of program plays a



very important role in heightening the safety of all vulnerable road users, such as school children and motorcyclists. This action coincides with the increasing efforts from the Royal Government of Cambodia to reduce traffic accidents in Cambodia to the lowest possible level."

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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 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.