VIETNAM’S NATIONAL CHILD HELMET ACTION PLAN: What Happens When We Work Together

Le Dinh Trong Nhan1,2, Lukas Parker1,3, Mai Thi Hoai Son1, Mirjam Sidik1, Natalie Draisin4

1AIP Foundation, Vietnam, 2Institute of Public Health, Vietnam, 3RMIT University, Australia, 4FIA Foundation, USA

The Road Crisis in Vietnam

THERE ARE MORE THAN 22,000 ROAD CRASH DEATHS ON VIETNAM’S ROADS EVERY YEAR.

The motorcycle is the dominant form of transportation nationwide and is often the family vehicle – there are 48 motorcyles for every car.

Motorcyclists account for 57.9% of road deaths annually, and 78% of these fatalities result from head injuries.

Motorcycle helmet use has been compulsory in Vietnam for adults since 2007 and children since 2010.

ADULT HELMET RATES ARE GENERALLY MORE THAN 90%, THOUGH CHILD HELMET USE IS OFTEN JUST BETWEEN 15%-53%.


The National Child Helmet Action Plan (NCHAP) was a Vietnamese government initiative, which included a coordinated multi-sectoral intervention, with the aim of increasing child helmet use.

Diverse stakeholders contributed to the initiative:

- UN Agencies (WHO and UNICEF)
- Research Bodies (CDC)
- Corporate Partners and Civil Society Organizations (GRIP, FIA Foundation, The UPS Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, Abbott)
- Helmet Manufacturers
- AIP Foundation
- Provincial Authorities
- Local Communities, Schools, and Hospitals

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Public awareness campaigns
- School-based measures
- Enhanced police patrolling and enforcement
- Capacity building and support in target provinces with key stakeholders

Notably, a police enforcement blitz with warnings, then fines, was conducted in early April 2015 across key provinces, including Vietnam’s three biggest cities.

Research Objective

Evaluate the effectiveness of Vietnam’s national integrated, multi-sector campaign to increase child motorcycle helmet use.

Methodologies

AIP Foundation conducted unannounced, filmed helmet observations around school gates to measure students’ helmet wearing rates in key communities pre- and post-intervention. This methodology was co-developed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

In the three major cities, 84,225 students were observed in March 2014, April 2015, December 2015, and May 2016. In the other 12 provinces, 62,334 were observed in March 2015, December 2015, and May 2016.

Results

Changes in Child Helmet Use Rates in Three Major Cities: Hanoi, Danang, Ho Chi Minh City

Coordination and cooperation among many stakeholders saw a near doubling in child helmet compliance. Particularly, enforcement is critical during a child helmet campaign to maximize helmet use. The highest compliance rates occurred straight after police blitzes and tapered off in the months following.

Changes in Child Helmet Use Rates in 12 Provinces

The government is continuing to implement NCHAP activities nationwide. AIP Foundation is continuing its school-based and awareness campaigns, while also working closely with the government to ensure continued progress.

Moving Forward