

For immediate release

Date: December 12, 2019

News Release

***Helmets for Families* delivers quality helmets to students in third most populous province of Cambodia**

BATTAMBANG PROVINCE, Cambodia – On Thursday, December 12, 2019, the *Helmets for Families* program, organized by AIP Foundation with the support of Manulife Cambodia, held a symbolic helmet handover ceremony at Onlong Vil Primary School in Onlong Vil Commune, Sangke District, Battambang Province, in which 1,238 helmets were donated to students, teachers, and parents. The event was attended by provincial and national government representatives, including officers of Battambang Province, as well as road safety stakeholders and representatives from Manulife Cambodia and AIP Foundation.

H.E **Min Meanvy**, Secretary of State of the Ministry of Public Works and Transport and Secretary General of the National Road Safety Committee, opened up the event with a keynote speech about the importance of helmet wearing to students, teachers, and parents. “I am pleased with the program’s implementation in Battambang Province, where road deaths are ranked as the highest among all provinces in Cambodia. We need to provide appropriate protection for children in order to develop road safety spirit among them when traveling to and from school. I urge all children to wear a helmet whenever traveling by bicycle or motorbike, regardless of distance as well as help reminding their parents to wear helmets in order to protect their lives, physical bodies and properties from road crashes.” Following the keynote speech, students participated in awareness-raising games and activities on proper helmet use and identifying traffic signs and crosswalks, which was followed by student performances and helmet use demonstrations. The event concluded with stakeholders and representatives symbolically placing the donated helmets on students and teachers of Onlong Vil Primary School, representing the new partnership.

Despite the introduction of the universal helmet law in Cambodia in 2015, less than 5% of students at Onlong Vil Primary School wear helmets. Approximately 80-95% of students commute by motorcycle or bicycle at Onlong Vil Primary School. Additionally, at least 80% of students at Onlong Vil are from low-income local families, making it difficult for parents to afford a helmet for their children.

H.E Nguon Ratanak Governor of Battambang Province and Chairman of Provincial Road Safety Subcommittee, remarked, “Onlong Vil primary school is located in a high-density traffic area along national road #5 in Battambang Province. Therefore, students and teachers are extremely vulnerable to road crashes, particularly during rush hour during commutes to and from school. We believe that with helmet enforcement, their chances of injury will be greatly reduced.”

The *Helmets for Families* program, which has operated in Cambodia since 2012, aims to provide such parents with quality helmets, to promote helmet use through engaging parents as role models, providing training opportunities, and targeting mothers and their children on safe road behaviors.

Mr. **Robert Elliott**, CEO and General Manager of Manulife Cambodia, stated, “From 2012-2019, target schools participating in the *Helmets For Families* program saw child helmet usage rates increase from 3% to 97% after intervention— validating everything that this program has strived to achieve. We are honored to continue supporting this program to communities who need it most, with the hopes of encouraging students and their parents to take a proactive, defensive role, against potential road injuries.”

Mr. **Kim Pagna**, Cambodia Country Director of AIP Foundation, expressed, “Children see parents as role models and decision makers, but only **78%** of parents remind children to wear helmets when riding motorbikes. We believe that through these programs, even more parents will understand the importance of enforcing helmet wearing for their children.”

Since 2012, Manulife Cambodia and AIP Foundation have delivered road safety education and skills to 5,002 students, 261 teachers and 9,129 parents across Cambodia. Over 100 children have been saved from serious head injury through the *Helmets for Families* program.

###

About Manulife Cambodia

Manulife Cambodia started its operations on June 28, 2012. As the first wholly foreign-owned life insurance company in the kingdom, Manulife Cambodia is committed to providing its customers with much needed financial protection through its products and services. The company’s vision is to help build a healthier and better financial future for Cambodia families.

About Manulife

Manulife Financial Corporation is a leading international financial services group that helps people make their decisions easier and lives better. With our global headquarters in Toronto, we operate as Manulife across our offices in Canada, Asia, and Europe, and primarily as John Hancock in the United States. We provide financial advice, insurance, as well as wealth and asset management solutions for individuals, groups and institutions. At the end of 2018, we had more than 34,000 employees, over 82,000 agents, and thousands of distribution partners, serving almost 28 million customers. As of September 30, 2019, we had over \$1.2 trillion (US\$881 billion) in assets under management and administration, and in the previous 12 months we made \$29.8 billion in payments to our customers. Our principal operations in Asia, Canada and the United States are where we have served customers for more than 100 years. We trade as 'MFC' on the Toronto, New York, and the Philippine stock exchanges and under '945' in Hong Kong.

About AIP Foundation

AIP Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing road injuries and fatalities in low- and middle-income countries. For more than 18 years, 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.

For media contact:

AIP Foundation

Gabby Cohen, Communications Coordinator, AIP Foundation

74 Mac Dinh Chi Street, Da Kao Ward, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Tel: (+84-28) 6299-1409 Ext. 128

Email: gabby.cohen@aipf-vietnam.org

Manulife Cambodia

Saoyuthnea DARA, Senior Communications Manager, Manulife Cambodia

Tel: (+855)11 759 964

Email: saoyuthnea_dara@manulife.com