



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Tackling poverty by making commutes for schoolchildren safer**

YEN BAI, THAI NGUYEN, AND TUYEN QUANG PROVINCE, Vietnam—November 13, 2020

AIP Foundation, in collaboration with the National Traffic Safety Committee and the Ministry of Education and Training, expands the *Helmets for Kids (HFK)* program, supported by Johnson & Johnson, delivering life-saving interventions to rural communities in Yen Bai, Thai Nguyen and Tuyen Quang provinces, Vietnam. Each of these provinces are home to a significant number of ethnic minorities. The life-saving interventions include helmet distribution and education activities focusing on safe helmet use. The very first event of the program expansion will be hosted in Yen Bai Province on November 13, 2020.

“The reality is that every day a child leaves their home to go to school, without proper safety equipment like a helmet, they’re at risk on the road. We need to take an urgent, proactive role in empowering communities with proper road safety knowledge and resources on helmet use, whether it’s on a motorbike or bicycle, so that wearing a helmet becomes instinctive and natural rather than a novelty. Something as simple as wearing a helmet can be the difference in that child coming back home to their family happy and healthy,” Mr. Jun Hong Park, Managing Director of Johnson & Johnson Vietnam shared.

Ethnic minorities and rural populations face a range of challenges in accessing mainstream services and resources, making it difficult to break the cycle of poverty. The *HFK* program aims to mitigate the economic and social disparity by reducing brain injuries related to road crashes in school zones and the surrounding communities through increased ratio of quality helmet use among children. The *HFK* program expansion will commence with a helmet handover ceremony at each project school and will be accompanied by an “edutainment” event with a series of interactive games focusing on proper helmet use. Across the 16 schools, 7,375 students, 451 teachers and staff, local authorities and community members will participate in the edutainment activities.

“Education is fundamental in breaking the cycle of poverty. However, barriers like unsafe commutes, lack of school zones, low community awareness in road safety and speed limit compliance, all prevent students, and oftentimes their families, from living a better life. Everyone deserves equal access to the tools and resources in their community especially education and knowledge. By focusing on equity, inclusivity, and diversity, we’re working towards this vision. Programs like *Helmets for Kids* help raise the quality of life standard for communities, especially for our young people,” Na Huong, Deputy CEO of AIP Foundation shared.

*Helmets for Kids* is a road safety program, which focuses on increasing the helmet-wearing rate among children in areas where road crash and injury risks are high, but preventative actions are low. *HFK* improves road safety knowledge, provides high-quality helmets to students and teachers at program schools who become role models and educates parents as key decision makers in their children’s helmet use. These approaches ensure communities are equipped and better able to reduce the risks of losing their main mode of transportation or medical costs, which would force them into deeper poverty.



The *HFK* program has been supported by Johnson & Johnson since 2004. In 2020, the Program will be distributing over 5,700 helmets to children and teachers, in addition to providing tools and resources to ensure children in the community are commuting to school safely.

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#### **About AIP Foundation**

AIP Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing road injuries and fatalities in low and middle-income countries. For 20 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](http://www.aip-foundation.org) or connect with us on Twitter [@AIPFoundation](https://twitter.com/AIPFoundation).

#### **About Johnson & Johnson**

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