



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National and local governments in central Vietnam receive two prestigious international awards for prioritizing safe school zones to safeguard every child's journey to school

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For their impressive collaborative work to improve road safety for youth and for the community, national and local governments in Vietnam will be awarded two highly prestigious international road safety awards for their work in Pleiku City, which now serves as a model for safe school zones nationwide.

From local to national impact:

Learning is one of the main components of our everyday life, especially during our childhood and as young adults. Everyone has the right to go to school to learn and build their future. This is why safe mobility and easy commuting to and from school is at the heart of everyone's access to education. Sadly, around the world, our children are one of the most vulnerable road users.

The World Health Organization estimates that road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death for children and young adults (aged 5-29 years old) globally. Across the world, many children are safeguarded by taking public transportation, by riding their bikes, or by walking on safe roads. However, not every student in Vietnam enjoys equal safety on their way to and from school.

Through a combination of various interventions - including the improvement of school zone infrastructure, education, communications, and policy advocacy - the *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* program has made landmark advances to save lives notably by reducing speeds in school zones, and now, Pleiku serves as a model for safe school zones nationwide.

The *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* program began with two pilot schools and expanded throughout Pleiku City. The program eventually reached all 31 primary schools in the city, of which 23 schools reached the maximum 5-star safety rating, as assessed by the Star Rating for Schools tool. Through partnerships at the local, provincial, and national levels, the program's reach is extending to the entire country.

From a national impact to international recognition:

National and local governments were awarded in recognition of their initiation of the *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* policy, and the resulting infrastructure improvements and reductions in speed limits conducted in partnership with AIP Foundation, supported by Fondation Botnar, under the Botnar Child Road Safety Challenge, the Global Road Safety Partnership, iRAP, the FIA and the FIA Foundation.

Saul Billingsley, Executive Director at the FIA Foundation shared, "These prestigious awards recognise the commitment to road safety of the Vietnamese government at national, regional and city level. The *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* interventions in Pleiku clearly demonstrate that low traffic speeds, combined



with safe infrastructure design, are the best way to protect children on their vital school journey. We hope that children across Vietnam will benefit as this evidence is translated into national action.”

These measures save lives by reducing speeds in school zones and are now a model for safe school zones throughout Vietnam. For the impressive work and joint efforts made on the national and local governments levels, a ceremony will take place on September 21, in Hanoi for them to receive not one, but two highly prestigious international awards:

- **Prince Michael International Road Traffic Safety Award 2020** to the National Traffic Safety Committee (NTSC) and the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). This award is the recognition of the organizations' great contribution to the improvement of road safety around the world. Though initially awarded in November 2020, due to the pandemic, the annual ceremony did not take place.
- **International Vision Zero for Youth Leadership Award 2022** to the Gia Lai Province People’s Committee and Pleiku City People’s Committee. This award recognizes noteworthy road safety practices that can inspire other cities to take bold steps to reach zero traffic deaths among children and youth in their communities. Nancy Pullen-Seufert, Director, National Center for Safe Routes to School, UNC Highway Safety Research Center shared “By recognizing the outstanding achievements of this city and province, we hope to inspire other places to take bold steps to reach zero traffic deaths among children and youth in their communities too.”

Mr Do Viet Hung, Chairman of Pleiku People’s Committee, shared: “It is a great honor that Pleiku City, Gia Lai Province, and Vietnam, are recognized internationally for the efforts we are making to protect our children. Vietnam takes at heart ensuring a bright future for them with our National Road Safety Strategy, following the goals of the 2021-2030 Decade of Action for Road Safety. Thanks to the *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* program, we have proven that Pleiku City can be a model city for safe school zones in our country, as well as a replicable model not only nationwide, but also in South-East Asia.”

“We are truly humbled and honored to receive these two awards today. Every child in Vietnam deserves to travel safely to and from school, without dangers and without risks. It means a great deal to us that our mission not only resonates with the international community but is also receiving such distinguished recognition from the road safety field,” shared leaders from the National Traffic Safety Committee.

The work that started in Pleiku City forms a model that can be replicated both in national and global contexts. Key elements include using evidence-based systems for data collection—such as the iRAP Star Rating for Schools app—developing local capacity in applying these technologies, forming partnerships across the public and private sector, launching awareness campaigns designed to mobilize the public, and demonstrating the proven value of investing in road safety to governments. The *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* program's holistic approach benefits the youngest people across Vietnam to keep them safe when traveling to access education and build their future.



Greig Craft, Founder and President of AIP Foundation, shared, "AIP Foundation is proud that *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* has been recognized with the Prince Michael International Road Traffic Safety Award 2020 and the International Vision Zero for Youth Leadership Award 2022. Youth is at the heart of our work towards vision zero for global road safety and equal access to mobility. We need to safeguard and empower our next generation to create a future that serves everyone equally."

The program aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals target 3.6 calls to halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes, as well as with the Global Plan of the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. Similarly, Vietnam's current National Road Safety Strategy supports meeting the goals of the 2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring maximum traffic safety for school zones across the country.

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About the *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* program

The overall purpose of the Slow Zones, Safe Zones program is to reduce road crash injuries and fatalities in school zones. Our achievements thus far demonstrate that the students' journeys to and from school become safer through the implementation of traffic calming measures, reduction of posted speed limits in school zones, application of interactive learning through an e-curriculum, and public awareness campaigns combined with the enforcement of new posted speed limits. The *Slow Zones, Safe Zones* program is supported by Fondation Botnar, Global Road Safety Partnership, iRAP, the FIA, and the FIA Foundation.

About AIP Foundation

AIP Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing road injuries and fatalities in low and middle-income countries. For over 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 or connect with us on Twitter @AIPFoundation. <https://www.aip-foundation.org/>

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