Annual collaborative workshop held to share best practices empowering Cambodian workers to self-advocate for their safe mobility rights

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia – June 13, 2023

AIP Foundation – a nonprofit organization focusing on safe, sustainable and equitable mobility - is hosting an annual workshop to share best practices and experiences on how to improve commuting safety for Cambodian workers as part of the Prevention and Participation program supported by VF Corporation. The workshop is organised in collaboration with stakeholders including the National Road Safety Committee (NRSC) and the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training in Cambodia.

The workshop presents a unique opportunity for stakeholders to appeal to the National Road Safety Committee (NRSC) and concerned government bodies to take action to improve the safety of commuting workers.

On behalf of the Transportation Working Group (a group of industry stakeholders that looks to address the dangers of Cambodian garment worker’s daily commute), a representative from the ILO’s Better Factories Cambodia programme will present the ‘Declaration of Action’ to the Secretary-General of the NRSC. The Declaration of Action was initiated by Mr Jean Todt, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Road Safety during his visit to Phnom Penh in November 2022 and is signed by 35 industry stakeholders.

The Declaration of Action serves as a blueprint for actions that the NRSC can take to ensure that workplaces comply with road safety rules and road traffic laws, ultimately improving the commuting conditions for thousands of factory workers.

Sharing best practices and experiences to improve commuting safety for workers in Cambodia

The objective of the workshop is to bring together stakeholders involved in the program implementation to promote ongoing dialogue and impact lasting legal change to safeguard commuting safety. Representatives from factories, buyers/brands, trade unions, driver associations, Special Economic zones and national and sub-national will be invited to exchange about opportunities to collaborate and further discuss the implementation of the ‘Garment and Footwear Sector Road Safety Strategy’. These stakeholders will identify possible actions and support factory level initiatives to address and act on specific commuting safety issues for Cambodian workers. The Transportation Working Group will present their key recommendations for actions to be taken as part of the ‘Declaration of Action’.

AIP Foundation Cambodia staff will present on the Prevention and Participation program as well as the best practices criteria, which are based on four elements. The first is the transition to safer and seated trucks, the second is an implementation of a factory level road safety policy, the third covers increasing factory workers knowledge and awareness, and the final criteria is increasing quality helmet use.
The activities under the program are directly linked to the action items outlined by the United Nations and World Health Organization - in the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030. On a national level, the National Social Security Fund and the General Secretariat of the NRSC were presented on the Global Plan by AIP Foundation in October 2021. As part of the Decade of Action, Cambodia is aligned on the international stage with the target to reduce road injuries and fatalities by 50% by 2030.

Winning the prestigious Prince Michael International Road Safety Award 2022 for the Prevention and Participation Program in Cambodia

VF Corporation won the 2022 Prince Michael International Road Safety Award for their efforts to improve commuting conditions for factory workers. Yearly, the Prince Michael International Road Safety Awards are presented to organizations in recognition of their outstanding contribution to improving road safety. H.R.H. Prince Michael of Kent, a long–time patron of road safety efforts worldwide, presented the award to Jens Aas from VF Corporation in London, UK in December 2022.

“We are truly honoured to receive this esteemed award in recognition of our efforts to improve the road safety conditions that factory workers face daily. This award underscores our commitment to work together to ensure no one is at risk when traveling to and from work,” shares Jens Aas from VF Corporation.

Driving safer mobility in Cambodia through collaboration and self-advocacy

From 2020 to 2022, VF Corporation tackled factory worker transport safety in Cambodia with a program establishing peer-to-peer Road Safety Working Group (RSWGs) committees at six footwear/garment factories in Cambodia. RSWGs consist of factory workers, union representatives, driver association representatives, administrative staff, and managers who receive training in road safety issues, develop road safety policies and implement road safety action plans, and lead awareness activities. RSWGs foster leadership in factory staff to self-advocate for safer commuting conditions and make their peers’ suggestions a reality.

Outstanding contributions safeguarding lives and a renewed commitment

Overall, the program has recruited/trained 96 people as RSWG members at six factories representing a community of 27,697 workers and 307 communal transport drivers:

- After receiving education and capacity-building trainings, RSWG members’ road safety knowledge test scores increased by 79%;
- 7,100 motorcycle drivers and 389 collective vehicle drivers have been trained on safe road user behavior;
- After observing workers and employees at the factories, the helmet-wearing rate among them increased from 50.5% to 87.1%;
- Flatbed truck drivers have been motivated to switch to safer vehicles. The number of buses increased from 17 to 55, the number of vans increased from 6 to 13, and the number of
seated trucks increased from 80 to 149, while the number of standing trucks decreased from 189 to 76.

- 25.8% fewer road crashes with 36.4% fewer workers involved were recorded during the post-intervention period compared to the pre-intervention period.

As a result of these achievements, VF Corporation has expanded the activities since 2022 and introduced the program in seven more factories. Informed by the success of the Prevention & Participation program in Cambodia, VF Corporation has updated its “Facility Compliance Standards” to include a stand-alone section on “Workers’ Transportation”.

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**About the Prevention & Participation Program**
The P&P program, which will take place between 2020 and 2024, will be progressively implemented at 13 factories, reaching approximately 57,000 workers and drivers across 6 provinces. The program is financially supported by VF Corporation, one of the world’s largest apparel, footwear and accessories companies founded in 1899, and aims to improve worker transport (vehicle and driver licensing), reduce dangerous driver behaviors like overtaking, distracted driving, and non-helmet wearing, and improve infrastructure and traffic management around factories. AIP Foundation will continue to work with the government for policy and legislative change. In addition, AIP Foundation will build capacity and factory support to own and sustain initiatives and identify and implement measures that promote the transition to safe and seated passenger vehicles, driven by appropriately qualified drivers.

**About Prince Michael International Road Safety Awards**
Since 1987 our Awards have given public recognition to those who have improved road safety throughout Britain. Now the Prince Michael International Road Safety Awards recognise outstanding achievement and innovation world-wide. Each year the most outstanding examples of international road safety initiatives are given public recognition through the scheme. All road users, including pedestrians, drivers, cyclists, bikers and horse riders are asked to identify those whose initiatives make our roads safer and nominate them for an award. For more information, please visit [https://www.roadsafetyawards.com/](https://www.roadsafetyawards.com/)

**About VF Corporation**
Founded in 1899, VF Corporation is one of the world’s largest apparel, footwear and accessories companies connecting people to the lifestyles, activities and experiences they cherish most through a family of iconic outdoor, active and workwear brands including Vans®, The North Face®, Timberland® and Dickies®. Our purpose is to power movements of sustainable and active lifestyles for the betterment of people and our planet. We connect this purpose with a relentless drive to succeed to create value for all stakeholders and use our company as a force for good. For more information, please visit [vfc.com](http://vfc.com)
About AIP Foundation
AIP Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing road injuries and fatalities in low and middle-income countries. For over 24 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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