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Students from Kampong Thom Province equipped with skills and knowledge to be safe road users as part of the SAFE STEPS Road Safety Programme

KAMPONG Thom Province, Cambodia - June 17, 2023

As part of the SAFE STEPS - Road Safety programme currently implemented in Cambodia, with support from Prudential Cambodia and the Prudence Foundation, a new province kick-off ceremony took place in June 2023 across three schools to safeguard the lives of Cambodian students and ease their access to education. The three schools selected for this program year include Kampong Thom High School, Hun Sen Taing Koak High School, and Steung Sen High School. Approximately 900 students and 150 teachers have attended.

Throughout the day, students have had an opportunity to reinforce their road safety skills and knowledge with interactive games and fun activities. These include motorcycle driving training for eligible students aged 15 or above, helmet use training, and further training on understanding speed limits, avoiding distractions, and the importance of pedestrian safety. Students also participated in a road safety quiz to test their understanding. The program encompasses a holistic approach in which education is key for safe road user behaviors, in addition to the helmet safety component of the program.

Safeguarding young lives on the road across Cambodia

Children are at risk on their daily commute to get an education. Road crashes are the leading cause of death for children and young adults aged 5-29 years globally. In Cambodia, students accounted for 12% of all road fatalities in 2019 (RCVIS Annual Report 2019). Among them, nearly one-half of road fatalities affect secondary and high-school students.

This represents a public safety crisis that disproportionately affects young people the most. It highlights the urgent need for preventive action. Helmets are a uniquely affordable and effective protection against head injuries on the road. Wearing a quality helmet can reduce the risk of death by 42% and the risk of serious brain injury by 69% (World Health Organization, 2018). At the three high schools, the students and teachers have received helmets that make a life-saving difference for the vulnerable school community on their way to and from school.

“Students must firmly respect the road traffic law and always wear a helmet correctly regardless the distance, time and speed they are traveling on a motorcycle. While the Royal Government of Cambodia and concerned stakeholders have taken a great deal of interventions to address the alarming road crashes in Cambodia, it will better prevent road crashes when students and teachers actively participate in
educating families, relatives, friends and people in their own community to follow the road safety rules, driving responsibly and know how to drive based on the motored vehicles they are using,” shares H.E Mr. Thong Kong, Minister of the Ministry of Tourism and High Representative of the Chairman of the National Road Safety Committee (NRSC).

**A sustainable regional program for road safety**

The *SAFE STEPS - Road Safety* programme in Cambodia aims to mitigate risks on the road, by providing students with safety equipment and road traffic education. The guest of honor at the ceremony was H.E Mr. Thong Kong, Minister of the Ministry of Tourism, and the High Representative of the Chairman of the National Road Safety Committee.

The *SAFE STEPS - Road Safety* programme is part of the *SAFE STEPS and SAFE STEPS KIDS* programme, developed by the Prudence Foundation in partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC), The Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), and Cartoon Network for *SAFE STEPS Kids*. The programme aims to equip millions of children across Asia and Africa with actionable information designed to save lives and create a future generation that is well-prepared and resilient to life-threatening situations. To date, the programme has been deployed across Asia and Africa. This is the second year the *SAFE STEPS - Road Safety* programme has been implemented in Cambodia.

“Following the success of the first year of the programme, Prudential is delighted to see the continuation of the programme empowering young minds to be safer road users. To build sustainable communities that are safe for children and adults across Cambodia, members of every community play crucial roles in promoting road safety education. Teachers have a pivotal role in educating children about road safety and relevant laws. Schools should have the infrastructure in place to prevent preventable accidents, especially in school zones. Parents have a responsibility to regularly remind their children to be aware of their surroundings whenever they leave the house. Friends must also call out to each other when they see unsafe behavior, such as not wearing a helmet, driving recklessly, or driving too fast.” said Mr. Bunthet Cham, Director of Academy, Prudential Cambodia.

The ceremonies of the continued program across the schools are co-organized with AIP Foundation and in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, General Secretariat of the National Road Safety Committee, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and Kampong Thom provincial partners.

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About Prudential Cambodia
Since its establishment in 2013, Prudential Cambodia has become one of the largest life insurers in the country, providing customizable solutions to over 320,000 customers and approving more than USD 18.8 million in claims as of March 2023. By providing tailored life insurance solutions to individuals and families and conducting insurance seminars for the public, Prudential Cambodia helps Cambodians protect and secure their financial futures.

Prudential Cambodia is an affiliated company of Prudential plc. Prudential plc provides life and health insurance and asset management in 24 markets across Asia and Africa. The business helps people get the most out of life, by making healthcare affordable and accessible and by promoting financial inclusion.

About Prudence Foundation
Prudence Foundation is the community investment arm of Prudential in Asia and Africa. Its mission is to secure the future of communities by enhancing education, health, and safety. The Foundation runs regional programmes as well as local programmes in partnership with NGOs, governments, and the private sector in order to maximize the impact of its efforts. Prudence Foundation leverages Prudential’s long-term mindset and geographical scale to make communities safer, more secure and more resilient. The Foundation is a Hong Kong-registered charitable entity.

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.aipfoundation.org/

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