

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Blueprint for Better Safety: Launch of the *Safe School Zones Guide Vietnam* for Global Impact**

HANOI, Vietnam - April 11, 2024

Vietnam's *Safe School Zones Guide (SSZ Guide)* brings safe school zones a step closer to being a reality for all students across the country, proving that small actions lead to significant impacts. Two years in the making, this *SSZ Guide* is a reliable blueprint for urban planners, engineers, and policymakers to address the safe mobility issue around schools across the country on a larger scale. Earlier this year marked the first time that the *SSZ Guide* was officially handed over to the Ministry of Transport (MOT) of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

### **Worldwide Launch of the *SSZ Guide* for Global Impact**

Following this handover of the *SSZ Guide*, together with our partner, FIA Foundation, we are delighted to officially launch the *SSZ Guide* globally. During the launch, the AIP Foundation team will introduce the *SSZ Guide*, and participants will gain insider knowledge on how it was created and collaboratively developed with the government. An exciting panel discussion will follow, featuring key voices and expert leaders from the Ministry of Transport and FIA Foundation. Among many insightful topics, the panelists will explore in-depth how similar initiatives could be implemented and scaled in your respective countries.

"The FIA Foundation is pleased to support the global launch of the *SSZ Guide*, a collaborative effort with our partner, AIP Foundation, and the Government of Vietnam. This guide showcases how road safety interventions can be scaled from local pilot schemes up to national guidance with collaborative action. Sharing the *SSZ Guide* opens up the experience and best practice in Vietnam to a broader audience, which can support NGOs and governments to implement similar initiatives to make safe journeys to school a reality around the world," shares Saul Billingsley, Executive Director of FIA Foundation.

### **How Vietnam endorses the *SSZ Guide* in practice to safeguard young lives**

On August 28, 2023, the Ministry of Transport issued an official letter recommending the *Safe School Zones Guide Vietnam* as the first national reference material on safe school zones. Following the successful pilot study, which saw road safety conditions in all school zones improve, schools were upgraded from 1 or 2 stars before intervention to 4 or 5 stars after intervention (out of 5 stars being the safest). The number of crashes occurring in the school zones decreased by nearly 21% after the intervention.

Based on these encouraging results of the pilot study as well as the feedback from the government, the *SSZ Guide* will be scaled up to build the evidence base to support legislation strengthening a legal school zone definition in Vietnam – which would require all school zone developments to meet a minimum safety standard aligned with the parameters of the *SSZ Guide*.

Following this recommendation, provinces around the country are working hard to use the *SSZ Guide* to

improve school zone safety. In Hai Duong province, FIA Foundation and AIP Foundation teams recently visited a primary school that the provincial government modified following engagement and training with the *SSZ Guide*. The meeting and school visit in Hai Duong demonstrated the *Safe School Zones Guide's* effectiveness in improving safety for students when commuting to and from school through Hai Duong government's investment of VND 2,7 billion (USD 110,000) to enhance safety for six school zones in the province. Similarly, Gia Lai province has made significant progress by upgrading the infrastructure of 12 primary and secondary schools in Pleiku City.

In addition, the Vietnam Road Administration has expressed its recognition and endorsement of the *SSZ Guide*, repeatedly encouraging all provincial Departments of Transportation and related organizations nationwide to adopt *SSZ Guide* technical guidelines to optimize traffic management in school zones and provide guidance for constructing new schools. As a direct result, numerous provinces are actively conducting school zone assessments and developing action plans to enhance safety in school zones based on *SSZ Guide* recommendations.

### **Paving the way to safer streets for all students in Vietnam**

In Vietnam, over 17 million children commute between home and school 2-4 times daily. Many children share the road with speeding trucks, with no sidewalks to walk on going to school. Alarming, traffic speeds around schools frequently and significantly exceed internationally recommended school zones' speed limits. To safeguard the lives of young students on their journeys to school, AIP Foundation, in partnership with the FIA Foundation, has developed the *SSZ Guide*.

"We are so proud to collaborate with the government of Vietnam to enshrine the right of every student to travel to and from school safely. This *SSZ Guide* marks a monumental shift toward safeguarding our future generation, and we are so excited to share it with the world today," shares Mirjam Sidik, Chief Executive Officer at AIP Foundation. The *SSZ Guide* aims to provide a policy and procedure framework for safe school zones to be constructed and implemented around the country.

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### **Notes to Editors**

#### **About the FIA Foundation**

The FIA Foundation is an independent UK registered charity which supports an international programme of activities promoting safe roads, clean air and climate action.

[www.fiafoundation.org](http://www.fiafoundation.org)

#### **About the Child Health Initiative**

The Child Health Initiative is coordinated by leading global road safety philanthropy the FIA Foundation. The Child Health Initiative is an informal collaboration of organisations committed to advocating for the rights of children and adolescents to safe and sustainable mobility, and working together to implement and promote practical solutions. For a full list of partners see [www.childhealthinitiative.org](http://www.childhealthinitiative.org)

#### **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](http://www.aip-foundation.org) or connect with us on Twitter @AIPFoundation.

<https://www.aip-foundation.org/>

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