

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Making Safe School Zones a Reality: First Implementation of the Safe School Zones Guide in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam**

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Vietnam's *Safe School Zones Guide (SSZ Guide)* brings safe school zones a step closer to being a reality for students nationwide. Two years in the making, this *SSZ Guide* is a comprehensive technical blueprint for urban planners, engineers, and policymakers to address the issue of safe mobility around schools across the country.

#### **Collaboration for Safer School Zones in Vietnam**

Following its global launch, the *Safe School Zones Guide* is now being put into action. AIP Foundation, in collaboration with the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Transport and the Ho Chi Minh City Traffic Safety Committee, is proud to inaugurate the first school zone modifications carried out at four project schools using the *Safe School Zones Guide*.

The four project schools were identified as high-risk following a city-wide assessment under *AI&Me*, a parallel program that incorporates youth participation to identify unsafe school commutes. The results showed that 57 schools in Ho Chi Minh City will require critical safety upgrades with a majority receiving 1-2 star ratings using the Star Rating for Schools methodology (with 1 being the lowest and least safe rating and 5 being the safest).

"The *AI&Me* program embodies the power of collaboration, especially with our youth, who have proven that they are passionate about playing a role in improving the safety and well-being of their peers. In parallel, the *Safe School Zones Guide* is a vital tool that will help us implement vital changes to better protect the thousands of students who rely on our roadways every day," shares Mr Nguyen Thanh Loi, Deputy Director of the Special Division of Ho Chi Minh City Traffic Safety Committee.

In addition, this collaboration aims to support the Ministry of Transport's action plan to implement Directive No. 31/CT-TTg. This directive was officially released on December 21, 2023, by the Prime Minister to enhance and ensure order and traffic safety for school-age children in the future. This directive, calls for all relevant agencies to review and amend Vietnam's current technical standards and regulations for school zones. Following the announcement, the Ministry of Transport issued Decision 64, instructing all 63 provinces in Vietnam to provide detailed reports on their local assessments and action plans for enhancing school zone safety within their respective jurisdictions.

"Together with the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Transport, the Traffic Safety Committee, and the invaluable support of AIP Foundation, we are not merely renovating infrastructure; we are solidifying a culture of safety and empowerment for every student at the project schools. With each school zone modification, we inch closer to realizing the vision outlined in Directive No. 31/CT-TTg of the Prime

Minister of Vietnam, ensuring a future where every journey is a safe one for every school student across Vietnam," shares Saul Billingsley, Executive Director of the FIA Foundation.

### **Safer School Zones made into reality in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam**

The modifications around the four project schools (Le Quy Don Secondary School, Tran Quang Khai High School, Phu Lam Primary School, and Mac Dinh Chi High School) represent the start of a series of life-saving actions to improve commuting safety for the millions of students, parents, teachers, and communities that travel to and from school daily. The modifications include new pedestrian traffic lights, raised crosswalks, rumble strips, steel railings to separate the footpath and the parking area for parents, road signs, and markings.

The improved school zone modifications also encourage families to walk and ride their bicycles to school, paving the way for healthier and greener transportation. For all students across Ho Chi Minh City, these modifications will not only safeguard them on their commutes to school but will also ensure that all students have safe and equitable access to education and life opportunities. Building upon the project's assessment results, the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Transportation will develop a plan to improve infrastructure for other school zones in the city.

"Today's unveiling of school zone modifications at Le Quy Don Secondary School signifies practical adjustments to safeguard the welfare of students, educators, and families. Allocating resources towards enhancing school zone safety infrastructure, as demonstrated today, is an essential measure in securing the safety and success of our future generations," shares Mirjam Sidik, Chief Executive Officer at AIP Foundation.

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### **Notes to Editors**

#### **About the *Safe School Zones Guide 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 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*.

**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 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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