

## Community Youth Helmet Use Project in Thailand

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### BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

1.2 million people are known to die in road crashes worldwide. Countries with high injuries and fatalities from road crashes are mostly low income countries including Thailand. Motorcyclist crashes are the most prevalent of all crash types in Thailand. Wearing helmets is known to reduce the severity of injuries by about 72% and reduce deaths by up to 39%.

Following the release of the Global Good Practice Manual for helmet wearing, the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) assisted the Thai Government to develop a National Action Plan which included approaches to community interventions. With funding from the Japan Social Development Fund via the World Bank, GRSP was tasked to implement the Community Youth Helmet Use Project. In total 111 villages and school communities in North East Thailand which are amongst the poorest in the region were chosen as the focus of the project.

### BASELINE RESEARCH FINDINGS TO DATE

Baseline data has been collected in selected intervention and control sites on helmet wearing behavior amongst youth (age 12 to 18 years). The methodology includes analysis of police and hospital data, direct observations of youth helmet wearing behavior, and attitude surveys with youth and their parents.

54.2% of the reported cases of motorcycle injuries, based on hospital data, in 2007 in the intervention sites were in 12-18 year age group.

The majority of youth in the intervention and control sites ride a motorcycle and many ride to and from school - see Table 1.

Table 1: Percentage of students who ride a motorcycle by study sites

Behaviour	Non Sa-ard School, Khon Kaen (Intervention) %	Prathai School, Nakorn Ratchasima (Intervention) %	Samrong Wittayakarn, Ubon Ratchathani (Control) %
Ride a motorcycle	82.4	86.3	75.5
Ride to school	41.2	33.1	39.8

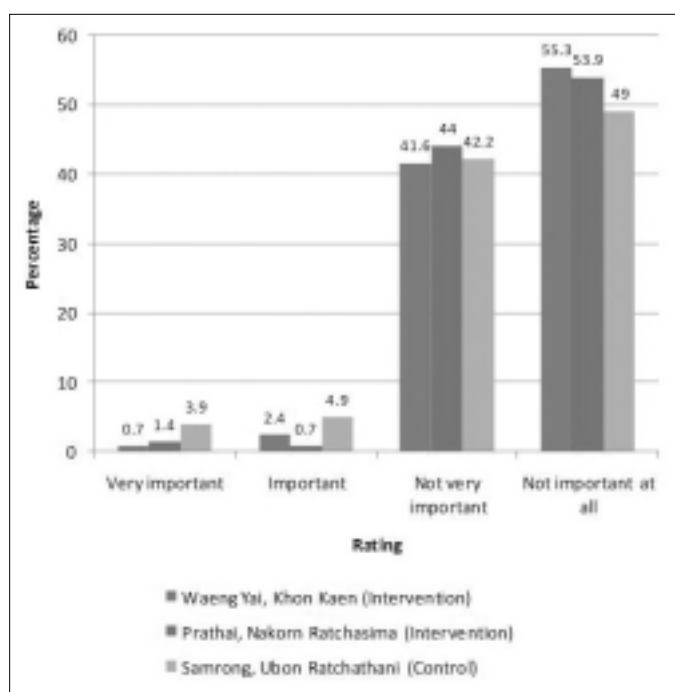
Based on observations, helmet wearing amongst youth was found to be extremely low in both intervention and control sites - see Table 2. Fewer girls than boys wore helmets.

Table 2: Percentage of helmet use by youth by gender and study site

Study Sites	Percentage Observed Wearing Helmets		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Waeng Yai, Khon Kaen (Intervention)	7.8	0.8	4.4
Prathai, Nakorn Ratchasima (Intervention)	10.1	4.6	7.9
Samrong, Ubon Ratchathani (Control)	9.6	4.6	6.9

Parents in both the intervention and control sites generally consider the need for their child to wear a helmet to be of little importance - see Chart 1.

Chart 1: Percentage of parent ratings of how important it is for their child to wear a motorcycle helmet



## POST-INTERVENTION RESEARCH

Post intervention data is currently being collected from both the intervention and control sites and the full evaluation will be completed in November 2009. The intention is to make the results of the evaluation available via the GRSP website ([www.grsproadsafety.org](http://www.grsproadsafety.org)).

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The project has developed innovative approaches to education, police enforcement, emergency medical services and helmet provision. In addition, a sub grant has been provided directly to communities to stimulate a range of local activities.

Six main project components have been implemented across the communities - as detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Main project components

Components	Scope of implementation
Public Awareness, Social Marketing and Sub Grant Mobilization	All 111 communities
Emergency Medical Services	All 111 communities
Education Systems and Delivery	All 13 targeted schools
Enforcement	Police in selected districts
Helmet Distribution	All 111 communities focusing on youth in communities and students
Research: Situation Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation	Selected districts

Under sub grant mobilization scheme, Planning Workshops were held with the participating communities and followed with Public Hearing as brainstorming session of communities. Finally, the series of activities on helmet wearing promotion will be selected from majority vote of community members. From these workshops, a number of innovative activities aimed at promoting helmet wearing were proposed.

### 1. Social enforcement checkpoint

Understanding that enforcement is essential in encouraging helmet wearing, the communities developed a plan for a social enforcement checkpoint activity to be undertaken by their village heads and volunteers. To enforce helmet wearing, they set up their own community regulations with different penalties, and ran checkpoints with assistance from local police. This activity has proved to be effective in promoting helmet wearing, particularly those ones with accident black spots.

### 2. Education on helmet wearing and road safety

To ensure that community members had a clear understanding of the importance of helmet wearing and how it helps protect the severity of head injuries, all communities proposed to have education on helmet wearing. The communities invited a number of guest speakers with different expertise, such as, experts in road safety, police and public health, as well as training on Emergency Medical Services.

### 3. Helmet wearing campaign and public relations

Most communities organized significant helmet wearing campaigns combining both education and entertainment activities - "Edutainment" events. Apart from this kind of campaign, most communities have been doing campaigns through local media and public relations channels, such as village radio and community broadcasting.

### 4. Helmet wearing signage

Communities placed both temporary and permanent signage to promote helmet wearing at the village black spots and/or the entrances and exits of villages. The look, photos and messages used were designed by the communities and these have been important in raising the awareness of community members.

### 5. Helmet Fund

Helmet fund will be established in some communities as "revolving fund" and is designed to make the project sustainable into the future. In several communities, fines collected at social enforcement checkpoints from those not wearing helmets will be channeled back into the helmet fund. This fund will be used for a range of activities including support for motorcycle crash victims, and continued support helmet wearing activities.