

¹P Gautam*, ²L Brondum*, ³A Françaia*, ⁴T Perez*, ¹M Lail. ¹Safe Kids Worldwide; ²Safe Kids Vietnam/Asia Injury Prevention Foundation; ³Safe Kids Brazil/CRANÇA SEGURA; ⁴Safe Kids Philippines

Background Between 2008 and 2012, Safe Kids organisations in 10 countries received grants to conduct the PHOTOVOICE Project.

Aims/Objectives/Purpose To assess the effectiveness of the PHOTOVOICE participatory research methodology in engaging communities and facilitating permanent changes to walking environments and evaluate whether the method is replicable in low-, middle-, and high-income countries.

Methods Safe Kids organisations conducted photography training and pedestrian safety education sessions with over 1700 students and collected observational and behavioural surveys, discussion notes, walking maps, and pre- and post-tests. Findings were used to identify high-risk areas and determine appropriate environmental modifications to improve pedestrian safety and advocate for the appropriate changes.

Results/Outcome Pedestrian safety knowledge scores increased by an average of 25% ($p < 0.0001$) from pre- to post-tests. Behaviour surveys showed that among children most walk to and from school, most walk alone, and most feel safe while walking in areas near home. Observational surveys showed that infrastructure deficiencies were the highest rated problem for sidewalks. Highest observed unsafe environments included sidewalks blocked by cars, trash and vendors; lack of painted crosswalks and lack of traffic signals. Permanent modifications were made to the environments where children walk in more than 50 communities in 10 countries based on the findings of the participatory research.

Significance/Contribution to the Field The participatory research project not only increased pedestrian safety knowledge and behaviour in communities but also served as an effective needs and risk assessment tool. The results also showed that the project is feasible and replicable across low-, middle- and high income countries.