

JAPAN



The Asia Foundation in Japan seeks to partner with Japanese government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and corporations to improve and expand effective development assistance to recipients in emerging Asia. The Foundation also pursues opportunities to promote dialogue and exchanges on critical issues affecting Asia-Pacific regional cooperation and reconciliation among the countries of Northeast Asia.

Throughout the 1990s, Japan was the world's largest provider of official development assistance (ODA). Even today, it ranks as the second largest provider of such aid, after the United States, despite a decade-long recession from which it now is recovering. In 2003, Japan adopted a new ODA charter that it is seeking to implement. Among other reforms, the new charter will focus more on human development needs (e.g. education, health, environmental controls) and changes in public institutions.

Japan's non-governmental organization (NGO) community also is becoming increasingly active in international development work. New coalitions of like-minded Japanese NGOs are building around issues such as disaster relief, poverty alleviation, agricultural development, and prevention of trafficking in persons. At present, this community remains relatively small, delivers only a tiny percentage of Japanese ODA, and has not yet "scaled up" beyond the project level to more significant programming levels.

At the same time, the Japanese corporate community, with its global reach and concerns, has become more fully engaged in Corporate Social Responsibility undertakings. A number have become pioneers and proponents of best practices in global corporate citizenship. Still more firms seek to incorporate such values and programs into their new business plans.

The Asia Foundation believes that its unique capability and experience in designing and delivering development assistance in Asia can be of value to Japanese partners who seek to improve and extend their practical help and cooperation in the region. The assets and needs among the Foundation, Japanese prospective partners, and potential partners in the recipient countries are naturally complementary. In recognition of this, The Asia Foundation has launched its Partners in Asian Development initiative in Japan.

MORE EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE

In Japan, The Asia Foundation is taking a two-pronged approach to facilitate and enhance the design and development of Japanese foreign aid to the recipient countries of emerging Asia. First, the Foundation is interacting with the official development assistance establishment (JICA, Foreign Affairs, Finance and Economics, Trade and Industry Ministries, JIBC, JETRO, etc.) to introduce its own experiences and strategies of effective development assistance. At the same time, the Foundation's strategy of identifying and remedying problems of ineffective governance and institutional reform as essential for successful technical assistance projects compliments Japan's foreign aid objective of increasing the self-reliance of recipient countries. Within the past year, Foundation country Representatives from Afghanistan and Indonesia visited Japan to present their strategies and experiences and to partic-



JAPAN

The Asia Foundation has had a continuous presence in Japan since 1954.

The Foundation brings its Asian country resident representatives to Japan to present and discuss development issues and explain the Foundation strategy as a means of informing Japanese thinking about new approaches to foreign aid.

Cross-border issues such as air and water pollution control, energy policy coordination and prevention of trafficking in persons are included on the Foundation's action agenda in Japan.

ipate in a range of events with Japanese institutions to analyze developments in those countries. The Foundation will continue to sponsor this visiting representative series as well as organize public exhibits, seminar, and presentations on the development process in such countries as Afghanistan in the future.

The number of Japanese NGOs planning and delivering technical aid to emerging Asia remains quite small and limited in scope. With its lengthy and in-depth experience of aiding the development of non-profit sectors in different Asian countries, and its own distinctive philosophy on the capabilities and limitations of programming foreign aid, The Asia Foundation is poised to cooperate with the community of Japanese NGOs to develop on the-ground needs assessments, project design, staff development, and project management.

The Foundation's extensive program network in the region and its practical approach to regional cooperation make it a suitable and effective vehicle for ameliorating difficult trans-national, cross-border problems, such as air and water pollution or trafficking in persons. In addition, Japan suffers from the deteriorating regional environment because of rapid industrial development elsewhere, especially in China. The Asia Foundation will launch a program planning exercise in late 2006 to determine how it might address that problem.

At the same time, Japan is the largest recipient of trafficked persons in Asia. The Foundation has been and continues to act as a provider of information and convener of forums to raise awareness of this problem in Japan. In the past year, Foundation staff participated in Japanese Diet hearings on amending legislation to enforce prevention of human trafficking and organized a video-conference with the World Bank Tokyo office and officials and NGOs in the Philippines to discuss how to control abuses in human trafficking. At the request of the World Bank Tokyo Office, the Foundation will organize several similar video conferences in the coming year.

CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP

In recent years, the number of multinational corporations providing both unrestricted and project-focused support to The Asia Foundation has expanded considerably. Building on those new relationships, the Foundation is designing a new Corporate Partners program for Japan and elsewhere. In return for a modest annual contribution, Corporate Partners of The Asia Foundation will be able to take advantage of a range of benefits and services offered by the Foundation. With its extensive regional program infrastructure and activities, the Foundation can be a convener of multi-stakeholder meetings and coordinator of corporate-community engagement projects. It also can be a provider of useful information and broker of corporate-non-profit contacts. Currently, the Foundation in Japan is meeting with a number of major corporations and business associations to identify the most distinctive and mutually beneficial ways in which partnerships can be formed.

DIALOGUE ON REGIONAL COOPERATION AND NORTHEAST ASIAN RECONCILIATION

As an organization deeply committed to enhancing peace and stability in the Asia Pacific region, The Asia Foundation has sponsored a number of relevant dialogues and exchanges and has been an active participant in the explorations and assessment of prospects for building an East Asian community. The Foundation's president and the president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency participated in a panel on this topic at the World Economic Forum's Tokyo meetings in June, 2006. The panel discussion highlighted the important roles the non-profit sector and business can play in promoting regional cooperation. In November 2006, the Foundation's Tokyo office is convening a workshop on the same subject of regional community building as part of the Foundation's larger project, "East Asia Community Building and the implications for U.S.-Asia Relations." Given the often tense situations that prevail in Northeast Asia, the Foundation also is inquiring into how it can prudently contribute to efforts at reconciliation between Japan and its neighbors.

The Asia Foundation is a private, non-profit, non-governmental organization working to advance mutual interests in the United States and the Asia-Pacific region. It is funded by contributions from corporations, foundations, individuals, and governmental organizations in the U.S., Europe, and Asia, and an annual appropriation from the U.S. Congress. Through its programs, the Foundation builds leadership, improves policies, and strengthens institutions to foster greater openness and shared prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region.



The Asia Foundation

HEADQUARTERS

465 California Street,
9th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94104 USA
Tel: (415) 982-4640
Fax: (415) 392-8863
info@asiafound.org

WASHINGTON, DC

1779 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Suite 815
Washington, D.C. 20036 USA
Tel: (202) 588-9420
Fax: (202) 588-9409
info@asiafound-dc.org

JAPAN

Igarashi Bldg. 3F
3-16 Kanda-Nishikicho
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0054
Japan
Tel: (81) 3-3292-8801
Fax: (81) 3-5259-0200
Email: TAFJapan@asiafound.org

www.asiafoundation.org