

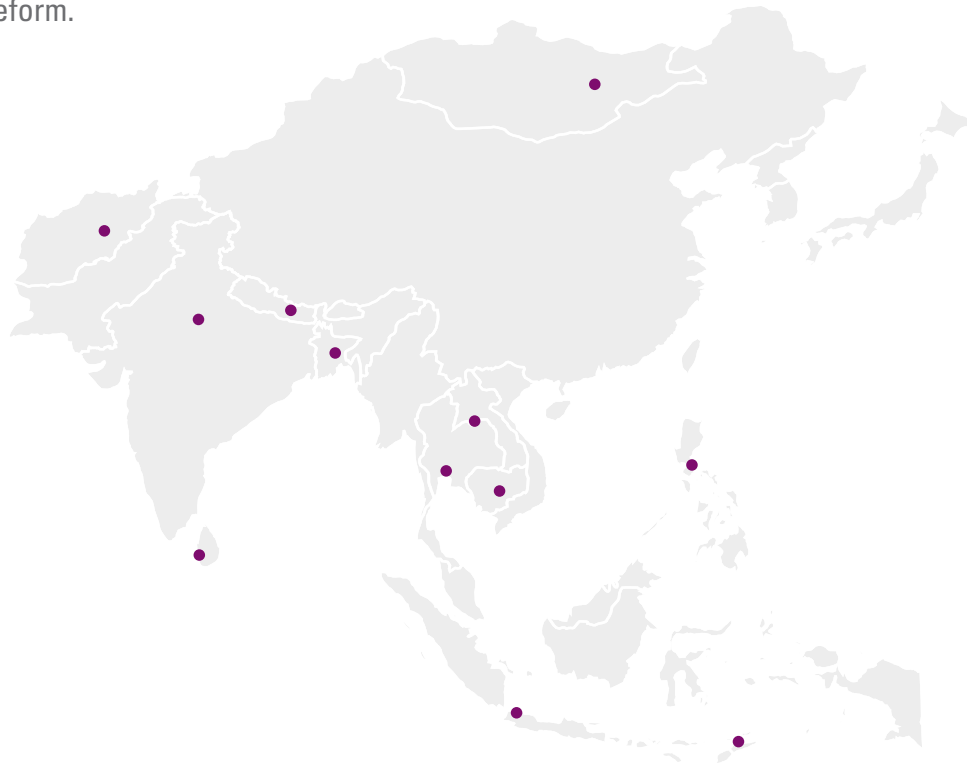
Security Sector Reform in Asia



The Asia Foundation

Improving Lives, Expanding Opportunities

The Asia Foundation has a long history of supporting security sector reform across Asia. We work at multiple levels—from military and police headquarters to communities—to ensure civilian-focused security for the benefit of all. The Foundation’s security sector programs are diverse, ranging from community policing to prison reform.



Security is a prerequisite for development. States need to make sure their citizens feel secure if successful transitions to peace and economic prosperity are to take root. When people are recovering from war or enduring active conflict, the military and police may not meet their security needs. Where security forces commit abuses, fail to respond to violence, or are ethnically or politically biased, insecurity is accentuated. Professional and competent security institutions—formal and informal—are essential for the rule of law.

OUR PROGRAMMING

The Foundation has worked to improve security institutions in 12 countries across Asia. We work directly with the police and military, and with closely related bodies such as the judiciary and prisons. Sometimes we work at the community level, at others to shape overarching strategies and policies. We work with informal security providers, building linkages to formal agencies. The Foundation aims to establish civilian-focused security that protects all citizens.

Community policing is one entry point. In Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste, the Foundation has run community policing programs that improve community-police relations, reduce levels of crime and insecurity, and inculcate a more pro-active and problem-focused approach to policing. The Asia Foundation has used community policing to build strong relationships with the police, which can then lead to broader discussions on institutional reform.

TIMOR-LESTE

Following the 2006 political crisis, which revealed deep tensions within the security sector, the Foundation partnered with the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL). We have supported the establishment of village-level, state-community security models that address safety and security issues and have worked to build these into institutional reforms so the approach will be self-sustaining over time.



As of 2016, 123 community policing councils in 12 municipalities have been established. We have provided more than 100 security grants to the councils to support activities to address pressing community concerns, such as land disputes and domestic violence. We and our partners trained new PNTL recruits and village-level police officers, and have provided support to the National Community Policing Unit.

The Asia Foundation has worked with its partners inside government to secure increased budget for community policing activities and to develop a national community policing strategy. These successes were possible by prioritizing local ownership from the PNTL and connecting citizen's demands to policy reforms.

INDONESIA

The Foundation's involvement in community-oriented policing in Indonesia began in 2005. Following the fall of President Suharto, Indonesia began a transition from authoritarianism to democracy. The police was institutionally separated from the military. Yet Indonesians still deeply distrusted the police given its history during the Suharto era.

The Asia Foundation established a community policing program, starting in Yogyakarta and then expanding it. A community policing approach was used to tackle a wide range of problems: trafficking of female migrant workers; arbitrating tensions between street vendors and the local government; addressing conflicts caused by illicit local mining; and preventing religious violence. Through the program, it became easier for citizens to engage the police, and to solve problems at the local level.

The Asia Foundation was able to build on the relations it had with the police to shift the focus of its engagement. After research found that inconsistent police responses to hate speech were a trigger for conflict between Indonesia's diverse communities, the Foundation now works to support the police's role in upholding religious freedom.

THE PHILIPPINES

The Foundation has supported security sector reform in the Philippines since 2004. The work began as an offshoot of our conflict management program on *rido* (local clan conflicts), a highly prevalent form of violence in Mindanao. The Asia Foundation has provided advice to the security sector and community leaders on preventing and resolving *rido*, in the form of a handbook published in 2007 and expanded in 2013.

Other initiatives have involved engaging the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) directly in the development of its doctrines. We have helped the military execute its mandate more effectively by building skills in areas such as community relations, leadership, and gender mainstreaming.

In its engagement with the Philippine National Police (PNP), The Asia Foundation helped develop a PNP handbook on *rido*, which includes a toolkit for prevention and resolution. The Foundation also helped the police improve its training on internal security operations.

The Foundation has also supported Bantay Bayanihan, a network which brings together civil society organizations monitoring the AFP's implementation of its internal peace and security plan. The Foundation supported the institutionalization of the network's role in the AFP Guidelines. An interagency technical working group, composed of representatives from civil society and government agencies, considers the Bantay Bayanihan experience on the ground when crafting security policies.

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.

A DISTINCTIVE APPROACH

The Foundation uses political economy analysis and other tools to understand the role of the security sector in society and obstacles to reform. We engage locally but over the long term, beyond the horizon of any one project. We view reform as a gradual process that must be led by key individuals within the security institutions themselves while including communities so that public demand can fuel change. We gauge the effect of our work through regular perception surveys.

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