



March 2016

In this issue: Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Nepal, Conflict, Working Politically in Practice paper series, Myanmar, Women's Empowerment, and Mongolia

Upcoming Events

March 30 – Dr. Arif Havas Oegroseno, the Deputy Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs in Indonesia, will discuss Indonesian maritime strategy in the 21st century as the country undertakes a new policy initiative to emerge as a regional maritime power. Read more about the Foundation's work in Indonesia [here](#).

Recent Events

March 1 – Dr. Srisompob Jitpiromsri, consultant for The Asia Foundation, and John Brandon, Senior Director for Regional Cooperation Programs discussed monitoring conflict and peace in Southern Thailand. Read more on the Foundations' work in Thailand [here](#).

March 2 – The Asia Foundation's Country Representative for the Philippines, Steve Rood provided an update on the upcoming elections in the Philippines and the ongoing Bangasamoro Peace Process in Mindanao. Click [here](#) for more information on our work in the Philippines.

March 2 – In a separate event, George Varughese, The Asia Foundation's Country Representative for Nepal, discussed the mixed and divisive reactions to the new constitution in Nepal which continue to fuel ongoing political turmoil and undermine progress in the country.

March 3 – Patrick Barron, The Foundation's Regional Director for Conflict and Development; Steve Rood, Country Representative for the Philippines; and George Varughese, Country Representative for Nepal, discussed the Foundation's approach to peace support in the new publication *Beyond the Toolkit: Supporting Peace Processes in Asia*, the fourth paper in the Working Politically in Practice paper series. Watch the video [here](#).

March 16 – Kim Ninh, The Asia Foundation's Country Representative for Myanmar; Ma Thida, President of PEN Myanmar; Tin Htoo Naing, Director of the Center for Economy, Environment and Society; and Kim Jolliffe, lead researcher of the Social Services in Contested Area Project provided insights and analysis on the political and economic landscape in Myanmar post-elections. They also shared findings from the report *Ethnic Armed Conflict and Territorial Administration in Myanmar*. Watch the video [here](#) and view the presentation [here](#).



In the News

Tweetchat Rallies Around Gender Equality for International Women's Day

March 8 marked International Women's Day, and to commemorate this year, The Asia Foundation's Women's Empowerment team hosted a tweetchat relay using the hashtag #IWDchat16, titled Advancing Gender Equality in 2016 and Beyond. We partnered with six other organizations and projects – USAID, World Vision, Promundo, Chemonics, USAID ASSIST, and Knowledge for Health – to highlight the progress being made toward achieving gender equality, to discuss continuing challenges, and to focus greater attention on the importance of empowering women and girls. With over 500 participants and over 2,100 tweets, the chat reached more than 4.1 million people representing activists and civil society as well as government, non-profit and private organizations, and more. The conversation covered diverse topics from how family planning can improve gender equality and using data to visualize gender gaps, to why including men and boys is essential and how empowering women is central to organizational effectiveness. During our half-hour segment, we posited to participants why gender equality is central to good governance through a series of five question and answers. Click [here](#) for a few highlights from the chat.

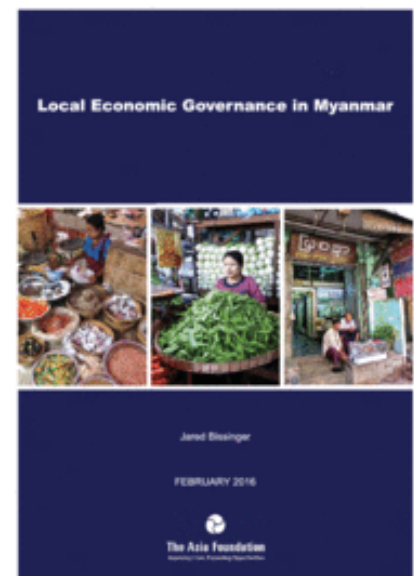


Principal for kindergarten No. 11, Mrs. Mijiddorj (right), shows off new BPA-free bottles.

Publication of Interest

Local Economic Governance in Myanmar

Local economic governance is a critical dimension in Myanmar's drive to reform, decentralize and achieve more inclusive and stable development. How businesses and individuals engage with the government in their income and revenue generation efforts and creating employment in the local communities in the process is pertinent to larger economic reforms that are being implemented and further proposed by government and experts. In the context of a country coming out of decades of military rule, any reform that can lead to greater transparency, fairness, and improved state-society relations will contribute significantly to the country's long term democratic transition and economic prosperity. More specifically, reforming economic governance at the local level is essential if the benefits of Myanmar's transition are to reach the majority of the country's people. Read more in the Subnational Governance in Myanmar Series.



The Asia Foundation improves lives, expands opportunities, and helps societies flourish across a dynamic and developing Asia. We work with innovative leaders and communities to build effective institutions and advance pathbreaking reforms. Together with our partners, we are committed to Asia's continued development as a peaceful, just, and thriving region of the world.