



**APRIL 2018**

Dear Lotus Circle Advisors, Members, and Friends,

I've just returned from time in Asia where we had our first Lotus Circle gathering in Singapore and where I convened a two-day Inception Meeting for a three-year Women's Climate Resilience program in Mongolia, Laos, and Fiji, which is funded by the Asia Development Bank. Having also recently attended our Country Representatives meeting in Sri Lanka, it's exciting to be forging new opportunities to advance women's rights in the region, and to build on work that is already having a powerful impact. Some highlights from these discussions include:

- Exploring opportunities to expand women's empowerment programming, such as The Asia Foundation's work in Sri Lanka focused on access to justice and gender inclusive judicial systems, and our work in India in supporting a Gender Lab for Boys—both made possible with Lotus Circle funding.
  - The potential of Lotus Circle funds to leverage significant funding from institutional and corporate donors, thus exponentially increasing the reach and impact of this work.
  - Women's empowerment remains one of the top priority program areas at the Foundation, second only to governance, accounting for roughly \$14m or 17% of total spending in FY17.
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Warm regards,  
Jane

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## HIGHLIGHTS

### Salesforce Hosts Lotus Circle Salon on Technology in San Francisco



Lotus Circle Advisors Lucy Lee, Goldman Sachs Growth Equity Investor, and Lisa M. Lum, Executive Director of Asia America Multitechnology Association and member of the President's Leadership Council, led a discussion on "Women Powering Change Through Technology" at Salesforce—a major player in the Bay Area and one of the fastest

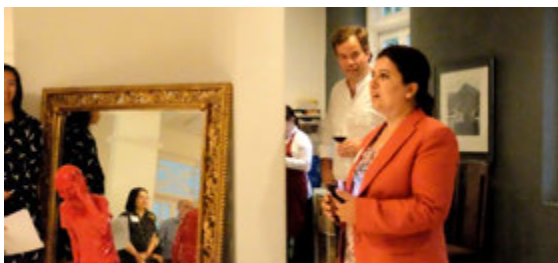
growing companies in the world with massive international expansion across Asia.

Jimmy Hua, Lead Software Engineer at Salesforce, and Kendal Kelly-Yahner, Senior Manager and officer for the Salesforce Women's Network, hosted the timely discussion that explored women using technology to catalyze change along with key factors that The Asia Foundation promotes, including:

- Improving women's digital literacy and access to information and communication technology tools
- Building robust networks and mentor relationships
- Increasing women's financial inclusion and know-how
- Connecting business skills development with appropriate technology

For more information on Lotus Circle Salon events in the Bay Area, please contact Melissa Weakley: [melissa.weakley@asiafoundation.org](mailto:melissa.weakley@asiafoundation.org).

### First Lotus Circle Gathering in Asia



On Thursday, April 26, in Singapore, we hosted our inaugural Lotus Circle gathering in Asia. Asia Foundation Trustee Brooks Entwistle and his wife Laura Entwistle,

EmancipAction Co-Founder & CEO, hosted the gathering in their home. Inaugural Asia Foundation Development Fellow Jaya Luintel spoke about her extraordinary experiences a storyteller and activist from Nepal; her advocacy for the human rights of women; and how her leadership capabilities, honed as a Fellow with the Foundation, helped her to become a more effective changemaker for women.

### **Spotlight: Meet Lotus Circle Advisor Masako Shinn**



*"I have never seen an organization with such a depth of thinking and drive. The best of a big organization with a small, entrepreneurial grassroots spirit." — Masako Shinn*

Dr. Masako Shinn is a partner of Graphis publishing company; founder of Graphis Asia; and has held senior positions at Drexel Burnham Lambert, Salomon Brothers, and Morgan Stanley. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees at ICU, her MBA from Harvard Business School, a master's degree in East Asian Studies at Columbia University, and recently completed a doctorate in design from the Bard Graduate Center in New York. She joined the Board of Trustees at the Asia Foundation in 2012 and has served on the board of the Freer and Sackler Galleries, the Japan Society, and the Kennedy Center's President's Advisory Council on the Arts.

Here's Masako on why she has made The Lotus Circle a priority in her life and why empowering women is so important:

"Asia is thriving, but women and girls are still not encouraged to be leaders. They are also seriously at risk and vulnerable to violence, ill health, and poverty. The statistics are sobering, but to me they serve as a motivation. I was born in Asia and was lucky—I was educated and encouraged. But it could have gone another way. Early on in my life in Japan, I had my options severely limited by my circumstances, and eventually had to move to the U.S. to carve out my own life. That is not possible for so many women. It's thrilling to know that your contribution is being used to find new and fresh ways to empower and encourage women and girls."

[Discover more about Masako.](#)

### **Green Jobs Strengthen Women's Resilience to Climate and Disaster Risks**

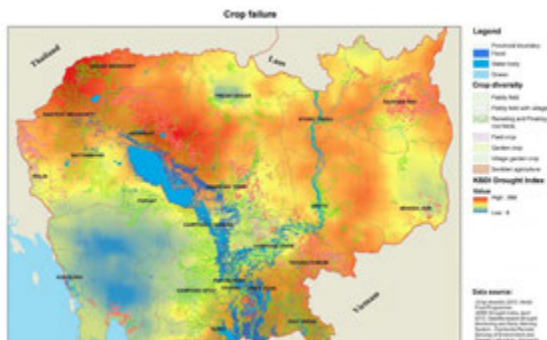
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The Asia Foundation is expanding its role as a leader on gender and climate in Asia and the Pacific with a new climate resilience partnership with the Asian Development Bank. The 30-month program will strengthen women's resilience to climate change and disaster risks in Mongolia, Laos, and Fiji. We'll do this by

demonstrating the potential for green jobs for women, and developing and advancing gender-responsive national and sector policies and actions on climate change and disaster risk management.

### Cambodia: Gender and the Environment Mapping Project



Cambodia is feeling the effects of climate change, having recently endured a searing two-year drought and, since 2000, three of the worst floods and storms in recent history. While increasing climate variability can have devastating effects on both men and women, it places a disproportionate burden on women in

Cambodia. Droughts and floods exacerbate women's existing vulnerabilities, such as lower levels of income, education, health, mobility, and decision-making power.

The Asia Foundation and Open Development Cambodia have developed a [series of 70 maps](#) to help visualize how different gender and environment-related factors may correlate across Cambodia. The project takes a birds-eye view of a broad range of gender, socioeconomic, migration, and environmental variables to help identify major trends that warrant further examination, research, and action. [Read more.](#)

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## COMING UP

**May 17: 6th Annual Young Lotus Soiree, New York**

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The 6th Annual Young Lotus Soiree will be held in New York City on Thursday, May 17, at Klein Sun Gallery—noted for its cutting-edge contemporary Chinese art. Lin Nie Jamison, a founder of The Young Lotus Circle, a Lotus Circle Advisor, and the evening's host will be sharing a film with guests. [Watch here.](#)

[Details and tickets.](#)

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