



July 2019

Dear Lotus Circle Advisors, Members, and Friends,

It was wonderful to see many of you in New York this month and to be able to share updates on our programs and activities. I also appreciated the chance to discuss with you some of the new opportunities we have to support work that will increase women's economic security, strengthen peace agreements and save lives in these communities. More about this soon.

It was also wonderful to see so many new faces – our impact is so much greater when we come together to advance women's empowerment and gender equality. I look forward to working with you all in the time ahead.

Finally, we're in the process of planning our Lotus Circle visit to the field for this fall. We're developing an itinerary that will showcase Lotus-supported projects in Cambodia and Laos, offering an opportunity to see up close the tangible impact created by your support for The Asia Foundation. And, of course, there will be plenty of fun and cultural experiences along the way! See below for more information on how to join us at the end of October.

Warm regards,
Jane

HIGHLIGHTS

Embassy of Australia, Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, and The Asia Foundation discuss paths forward to advance women, peace and security



Image courtesy the Embassy of Australia

On July 10, The Asia Foundation hosted [Views from the Ground: Advancing the Women, Peace and Security \(WPS\) Agenda in Asia and the Pacific](#) alongside the Australian Embassy and Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS) to share lessons learned in advancing the WPS agenda and discuss emerging issues for the time ahead.

Held at the Embassy of Australia in Washington DC, the panel featured Noraida Chio, Asia Foundation Senior Program Officer in the Philippines; Dr. Jeni Klugman, Managing Director at GIWPS; and Air Vice Marshall Alan Clements CSC, Defense Attaché and Head of Australian Defense Staff at the Embassy of Australia. The conversation was moderated by Jane Sloane, Senior Director of The Asia Foundation's Women's Empowerment Program.

Workshops in Mongolia, Laos, and Fiji explore ways to strengthen women's climate resilience

The Foundation recently organized back-to-back workshops in Mongolia, Laos, and Fiji on strengthening women's resilience to climate change and disaster risk.

These workshops provided an opportunity to share key findings and hear from government, civil society, and private sector representatives on national priorities and needs related to climate change and gender equality.

In particular, participants focused on promoting women's participation in the green economy and ensuring that climate change and disaster risk policies include women's needs and capacities.



Spotlight: Meet New Lotus Circle Advisor Deshi Singh



Deshi Singh joined the Lotus Circle as an Advisor in 2019. She helped establish the Young Lotus Circle in 2013, which hosts regular social and fundraising events to benefit the Asia foundation's Women's Empowerment Program. Deshi is passionate about supporting women and children, both near and far, and is actively involved in supporting organizations such as Planned Parenthood, Hudson River Park and WIN NYC.

Deshi holds a degree in Economics from Wellesley College. She spent nearly a decade in the finance sector, starting in Investment Banking at Morgan Stanley and working at hedge funds including Och Ziff and Hudson Bay Capital Management. She helped co-found Gem X, a jewelry social club based in NYC born out of a desire to transform jewelry into a social experience for a new generation of enthusiasts. In addition, Deshi is currently completing her Graduate Gemologist degree at the Gemological Institute of America.

Of her involvement with the Lotus Circle, Deshi says: *"After co-founding the Young Lotus Circle, and seeing the positive impact we have had by supporting the Women's Empowerment Program of The Asia Foundation, I am excited to further my commitment to this inspiring initiative as an advisor."*

Supporting women and girls in our global community is a personal mission. The Asia Foundation's Lotus Circle provides the resources, experience and expertise to make a truly global and meaningful impact in the lives of women and girls across Asia."

Lotus Circle Immersion Tour: Cambodia and Laos, end of October



We are thrilled to be planning a dynamic and inspiring field visit to Cambodia and Laos for Lotus Circle Advisors.

The tour will take place at the end of October with 3-4 days in Cambodia and 2-3 days in Laos. We are firming up exact inbound and outbound travel dates and look forward to sharing more

details soon.

We hope you can join us! For more information, email Nikita Desai at nikita.desai@asiafoundation.org.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

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View all previous Lotus Letters [here.](#)

The Lotus Letter photo (top of email) depicts The Asia Foundation's mental health and psychosocial training sessions held with Counselling Assistants in Sri Lanka. Image courtesy of Gemunu Amarasinghe.

