Welcome to TAF DC's September newsletter. This latest issue includes our upcoming event on the Pacific Islands, the most recent InAsia podcast episodes about South Korea and Vietnam, the latest InAsia blog posts about technology in Southeast Asia and data-driven policymaking in Cambodia, and TAF's two most recent GovAsia and Let's Read Mongolia publications.
South Korea: The Paradox on the Han River

South Korea has risen from one of the world’s poorest countries in the 1950s to one of the world’s richest today. It has become a leader in manufacturing and technological innovation, as well as a major pop culture powerhouse. However, many young Koreans are dissatisfied with the conditions at home and want to emigrate. Tune in to the latest episode of the InAsia podcast to hear more about this paradox from The Asia Foundation’s Country Representative in Korea, Kwang W. Kim.

Digital Skills for Inclusive Growth—Reaching the...
Hard-to-Reach in Southeast Asia

Across Southeast Asia, the digital landscape has become a contested arena, as governments and private companies seek to both drive economic growth and protect and control data flows, and as multilateral agreements advance competing visions of how to harness the digital economy for both political and economic ends. This has driven a growing digital divide between large tech companies and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the region. The most recent InAsia blog post looks at Southeast Asia’s digital problem and outlines what The Asia Foundation is doing to address these challenges. Learn more about the Foundation’s work on technology and development.

Vietnam: Nothing Is Impossible: Reflections on America’s Astonishing Reconciliation with Vietnam


Data-Driven Policymaking in Cambodia: Progress and Challenges

In early 2021, the Cambodian prime minister announced a third outbreak of Covid-19 with the discovery of 32 cases of community transmission. By the end of the year, Cambodia’s vaccination rate reached 85%, one of the
world's highest, and the prime minister announced the country "fully open." What was the key to Cambodia’s success? Read the latest InAsia insight to learn about how Cambodia is utilizing data-driven policymaking to address Covid-19 and other issues.

Recent Publications

GovAsia – Rollout: Reflections on Covid-19 Vaccination Programs in Lower Middle Income Asia

This issue of GovAsia explores four key challenges faced by several lower-middle income countries (LMICs) in Asia as they embarked upon massive universal vaccination campaigns in response to Covid-19. The publication examines issues related to vaccine shortages; how global supply inequities impacted 11 Asian LMICs;

Study on the Reading Habits of Parents and Young Children in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

In September 2021, The Asia Foundation introduced its Let’s Read Mongolia Initiative to promote reading and improved education outcomes, with funding from the Lorinet Foundation. The initiative aims to encourage reading with young children and increase the availability of high-quality Mongolian language children’s books. The
difficulties in rolling out vaccines equitably; and the ongoing challenge of vaccine hesitancy among populations. In unpacking these challenges, the authors hope to seed the reflection and dialogue needed for a better pandemic response and greater resilience in the future.

Asia Foundation worked with the Independent Research Institute of Mongolia (IRIM) to conduct a baseline study in early 2022. The survey collected data on the reading habits of parents with children aged 0-5, the accessibility and availability of books for children at home and kindergarten, and perceptions of the importance of reading books for the development of children.