

Thailand



In Thailand, our programs address many of the country's greatest challenges, including the middle-income trap, education reform, women's workforce participation, and the transition to a low-carbon economy. The Asia Foundation and its local partners also support Thailand's leadership in ASEAN and the Mekong subregion to address regional challenges.

Project Highlights

Facilitating dialogue between Thai leaders and foreign partners

TAF organized a track 1.5 dialogue in 2018 between Thai and U.S. leaders, and in 2022 between Thai and Australian leaders to discuss prospects for deepening bilateral cooperation.

Working with Thailand to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050

Supporting the Thai Ministry of Energy in its National Energy Plan and power development planning through the development of carbon-neutral pathways and analysis using integrated resource and resilience planning.

STEM education in rural areas

More than 2,000 school and university students in the Mae Sot district of Tak province received STEM training in 2022. More than 1,600 participants participated in the virtual Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University, Mae Sot Next Gen STEAM Festival and 25 female university students received local internships.

Upskilling digital technology for local entrepreneurs

Go Digital ASEAN trained 53,349 micro-entrepreneurs (63 percent women) in remote areas in the north and northeast in digital skills in 2022. The project is continuing to provide training to more local entrepreneurs in phase 2.

2022 Snapshot



1600 participated in the Kamphaeng Phet Rajabhat University, Mae Sot Next Gen STEAM Festival



3500 student essays informing policy on principals' roles in schools



Digital skills training for 50k female entrepreneurs in North and Northeast Thailand



Flagship Initiatives



Addressing Thailand's middle-income trap challenges

TAF is working with Thailand to help the country address the challenges of the middle-income trap such as declining economic competitiveness, workforce gaps, and imbalanced reform efforts. TAF is supporting Thai reform-oriented leaders in government through research on the barriers and constraints Thailand faces. Additionally, we support the Trade and Competition Commission to improve competitiveness in the Thai economy.

Energy transition in the Mekong subregion

TAF is implementing Mekong Safeguards to support policymakers, government regulators, major financiers, developers, and contractors to apply environmental, social, and governance standards to energy and transportation projects in Thailand and the Mekong region. For example, TAF's work with Thailand's Energy Ministry is projected to reduce CO2 emissions by 15 million tons annually, the equivalent of taking 3.3 million cars off the road.

Education reform

Despite universal primary school access, there is still a need to improve Thai students' quality of education. Partnering with the Thai Ministry of Education, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration, and Australia, TAF supports key reformers in government and research on the obstacles to successful reform. TAF is also collaborating with a Thai TV network on a series featuring education across Thailand.

Women's workforce participation

Thailand is facing a rapidly aging society, with 20 percent of the population aged 60 and older. This has led to low women's workforce participation, at around 60 percent. TAF has proposed models for change, including advocating for free and fair access to public childcare, universal child support grants, regulatory reforms for childcare facilities, home-based childcare businesses, and workplace nurseries.

Peacebuilding in Southern Thailand

TAF supports peacebuilding efforts in Thailand's southernmost provinces by promoting dialogue between the government, military, and Muslim leaders. We provide advice and support for government and southern leaders in promoting tolerance and understanding to advance the peace process.

Geopolitics and Thailand's foreign relations

TAF works with the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs to strengthen Thailand's relations with key external powers. We organize fellowships, bilateral dialogues, research reports, and roundtables to promote understanding and cooperation.

The Asia Foundation is an international nonprofit organization working to solve the toughest social and economic challenges in Asia and the Pacific. Informed by more than 70 years of experience and deep local knowledge, we work with partners across more than 20 countries through 17 offices to improve lives and expand opportunities.