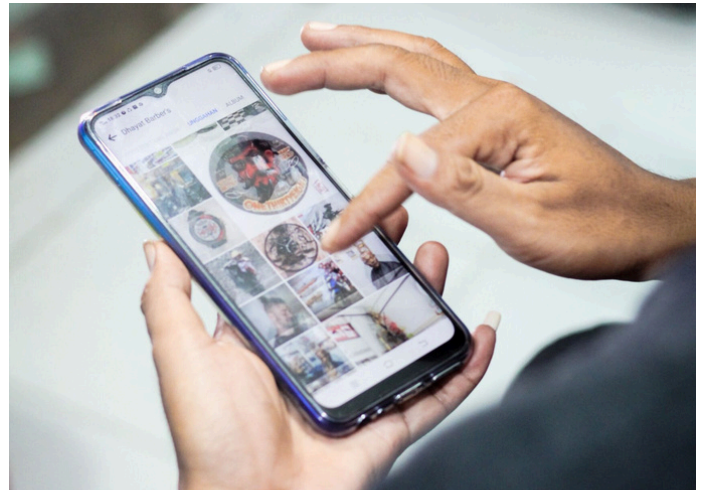APAC Cybersecurity Fund
The Asia Foundation

Bolstering Cybersecurity Capabilities across Asia Pacific

Asia and the Pacific consist of the largest group of internet users. In 2021, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, and Thailand recorded 40 million new internet users. Eight in 10 of these new users engaged in online purchases.

Naturally, more businesses in these regions are going online to unlock new economic opportunities. Even micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), budding entrepreneurs, social enterprises, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are venturing into online platforms to operate successfully. Eighty percent of MSMEs in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, and Thailand consider online platforms vital for their success. In fact, one in five of these MSMEs already rely on online platforms to reach potential customers while providing offline services (Online-to-Offline service platforms).

While the region is witnessing a rapid digitalization of businesses, it is also facing the highest number of cyber-attacks worldwide -- 31% of global cyber-attacks. Here, small businesses are more vulnerable as they lack the technology know-how and have limited access to proper protection against cyber-attacks. Seventy-five percent of small businesses in this region report growing concerns about cybersecurity.

Enhancing Cybersecurity

The APAC Cybersecurity Fund (ACF) aims to strengthen the region's cybersecurity ecosystem by equipping micro and small businesses, nonprofits, and social enterprises with skills to navigate the Internet safely and confidently. Entrepreneurs skilled at identifying and mitigating cyberattacks will bolster the region's digital economy growth.

The project, through training, works to improve the targeted sectors' awareness and knowledge of basic cyber hygiene. At the same time, for regulatory reform, the project's initiatives include policy dialogues and localized research on cyber threats. The project is also piloting THREE university-based cyber clinics in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Singapore to strengthen the cybersecurity workforce and expand community outreach on cyber hygiene essentials.

Cyber Hygiene Training

Upskill 300k organizations

Student led Cyber Hygiene Service

Policy Dialogues

in partnership with   CyberPeace Institute   GLOBAL CYBER ALLIANCE.   with support from   Google.org

ACF at a glance

- **Duration:** October 2023 - October 2027
- **Locations:** Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Thailand
- **Training target:** 300,000 underserved organisations
- **Global Partners:**
  - Global Cyber Alliance (GCA)
  - Cyber Peace Institute (CPI)

Program Components

Applied Research

- Identify cyber threats faced by targeted sectors in the training localities.
- Map technological and regulatory disruption factors.
- Promote/disseminate findings among regional stakeholders for policy recommendations.
- Provide context and effective mitigation approaches to the training curriculum.

Cyber Hygiene Training

- Awareness and skilling program to better equip underserved small businesses, MSMEs, NGOs, and Social Enterprises on cybersecurity practices.
- Leverage local implementing partners' expertise and understanding to design and deliver localized training content.
- Train MSMEs, NGOs, and Social Enterprises in 11 countries.

University Cybersecurity Clinics

- Pilot THREE university-based cyber clinics in a consortium model in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Singapore.
- Provide specialized training programs, workshops, and certifications to faculty and IT professionals.
- Foster student-led cyber hygiene services to NGOs and MSMEs in their communities.

Policy Dialogue

- Engage the region's policymakers to share, learn, connect, and discuss trends and opportunities to enhance cyber security.
- Increase program awareness through disseminating results and lessons learned.

About

Google.org, Google's philanthropic arm, is providing $15M to The Asia Foundation to launch the APAC Cybersecurity Fund in partnership with Cyber Peace Institute and Global Cyber Alliance to bolster cyber capabilities of 300,000 underserved micro and small businesses, nonprofits, and social enterprises.

Working with implementing organizations and universities across the region, The Asia Foundation aims to equip local communities and students with upskilling tools and cyber clinics to defend themselves against online risks. The initiative will span 12 locations including: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.