



Our office in Seoul tackles key development issues in Korea and the region, including inclusive growth, gender equality, and climate action in partnership with South Korean government agencies, the private sector, and civil society. Our Korea office also facilitates international relations and regional cooperation activities in Northeast Asia.

## Project Highlights

### **Preventing violence against women and supporting social and economic rehabilitation for victims in Mongolia**

Funded by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the Republic of Korea, the project provided education and awareness-raising campaigns to prevent violence against women. Over 8,000 beneficiaries in Mongolia were provided with preventive education, and victims with rehabilitation support and vocational training from 2019 to 2023.

### **Northeast Asia Youth Exchange on Climate Issues**

Gathered young experts from diverse backgrounds in Northeast Asia region for dialogues, knowledge sharing, and collaborative efforts. By fostering mutual cooperation, the program cultivates environmentally conscious leaders to develop innovative solutions addressing climate challenges that significantly impact the region.

### **Enhancing collaboration between the Republic of Korea, Australia, and the United States**

Organized trilateral dialogues in 2021 and 2023, bringing together 42 specialists from the ROK, Australia, and the US to build new and deeper ties and explore opportunities for future trilateral cooperation. The summary of the dialogues and recommendations was published for a wider audience.

## 2023 Snapshot



8,836 participated in the preventive education on violence against women in Mongolia, with a satisfaction rate of 94.4%



Business support program for 328 women entrepreneurs in Gyeonggi province, Korea



# Flagship Initiatives



## Vietnam Girls Scholarships

Since 2009, The Asia Foundation has provided scholarships to girls from low-income families and remote areas in Vietnam's Mekong Delta region through Friends of The Asia Foundation Korea funding. The scholarship helped 388 girls finish their secondary school education, easing their financial burden and providing a supportive atmosphere to persevere and succeed. By investing in these young women, the scholarship helps them prepare for higher education and career paths.

## Accelerating Women's Entrepreneurship in Korea

Through comprehensive business support services from 2020 to 2023, women entrepreneurs in Gyeonggi province identified 72 new market channels and raised 358 million KRW connected to 1,032 individual investors. The participants also established a business network and the Personal Initiative Women Entrepreneurs Association to continue to strengthen their self-starting and innovative business mindset for business growth.

## Expanding Economic Opportunities of North Korean Refugee Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship has become the primary means of economic activity among the 33,000 North Korean Refugees (NKR) in South Korea. However, only 16% of NKR entrepreneurs report that their businesses have survived beyond three years. The Asia Foundation conducted a survey of over 130 NKR entrepreneurs to identify key challenges. As a result, the Foundation provided Personal Initiative Training to over 50 NKR business leaders, helping them develop an entrepreneurial mindset to compete in South Korea's market-based economy. Among the participants, 67% reported increase in business performance. The Foundation also provided market support by offering training on sales channels and market entry strategies, connecting entrepreneurs with buyers, and providing individual consulting services.

## Enhancing Inclusiveness in the Korean Society

North Korean refugee students face numerous challenges when studying and settling in South Korea. Many must work to support themselves or pay tuition fees, leaving them with little time to study or establish social connections. The Asia Foundation's scholarship program, funded by the Kahng Foundation, provides financial support to North Korean refugee students pursuing undergraduate and graduate degrees, allowing them to achieve better academic performance and participate in social activities.

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives and expanding opportunities across Asia and the Pacific. Informed by decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region is focused on good governance, women's empowerment and gender equality, inclusive economic growth, environment and climate action, and regional and international relations.