



May 2016

In this issue: Women's Empowerment Program, Lotus Leadership Awards, Environment, Sri Lanka, LankaCorps, Asian Perspectives, Indonesia, the Philippines, Regional Cooperation, and Working Politically in Practice paper series

Upcoming Events

May 11 – This year, the Asia Foundation's Women's Empowerment Program will honor the First Lady of Afghanistan Rula Ghani and the Carnegie Corporation of New York at the sixth annual Lotus Leadership Awards Gala. Each year, The Asia Foundation's Lotus Leadership Awards recognize outstanding individuals and organizations that have made major contributions to the well-being of women and girls in Asia. Learn more about the Lotus Circle [here](#).

May 17 - Mr. Kim DeRidder, The Asia Foundation's Director of Environment Programs, will present an update on the Foundation's environment work in the areas of disaster risk management and climate change adaptation, climate change mitigation and green growth, and natural resources management in Asia. Learn more about the Foundation's Environment programs [here](#).

May 18 – The Embassy of Sri Lanka and The Asia Foundation will host a reception to promote LankaCorps, a unique fellowship opportunity for young professionals of Sri Lankan heritage to live and work in Sri Lanka, and contribute to development activities in-country. Find out more about the LankaCorps Fellowships Program [here](#).

For more information, please contact the TAF office at 202-588-9420.

Save the Date

June – The Asia Foundation's Women's Empowerment Program will host an Asian Perspectives event to discuss efforts to combat Violence Against Women featuring Asian practitioners and experts. Read more about the Foundation's Women's Empowerment Program [here](#).

Recent Events

March 30 – Dr. Arif Havas Oegroseno, the Deputy Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs in Indonesia, discussed Indonesian maritime strategy in the 21st century as the country undertakes a new policy initiative to bolster its status as a regional maritime power. Watch the video [here](#) and read more about the Foundation's work in Indonesia [here](#).



In the News

Imperatives for Peace Face New President in the Philippines

“No administration can afford to ignore the costs of conflict in Mindanao – not the human costs of conflict, the costs of development delayed or foregone, the budgetary and security costs of conflict, nor the risk of worsening a climate conducive to the spread of violent extremism.” This was the latest assessment of the Third Party Monitoring Team (TPMT) regarding the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) signed in 2014 between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). As the campaign period for the May 9 general elections comes to a close, increasing numbers of Bangsamoro peace process advocates are pushing national and local candidates for more explicit statements regarding their strategy in resolving the protracted conflict in Mindanao. Some worry about whether the peace process will continue under a new president. Read more from Anna Tasnim Basman, assistant program officer for The Asia Foundation in the Philippines, and Steven Rood, country representative for the Philippines, [here](#).



As the campaign period for the May 9 general elections comes to a close, increasing numbers of Bangsamoro peace process advocates are pushing national and local candidates for more explicit statements regarding their strategy in resolving the protracted conflict in Mindanao. Photo/Mar Roxas Facebook page

Notes from the Field

Asian NGOs Expand Global Influence

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have long played a crucial role in development cooperation, both in delivery of services and in policy advocacy. According to the OECD DAC, in 2013, DAC members allocated \$19.6 billion in official development assistance (ODA) to NGOs. The majority of this (almost \$13 billion) was channeled through NGOs based in donor countries. And, these NGOs are increasingly resourceful – in 2013, NGOs in DAC member countries fundraised over \$29.7 billion private sources. Read more from Zeng Lu, program officer for The Asia Foundation in China and Anthea Mulakala, director of the Foundation’s International Development Cooperation program, based in Malaysia, [here](#).

Publication of Interest

Reflections on Implementing Politically Informed, Searching Programs: Lessons for Aid Practitioners and Policy Makers

This paper reviews the experience of The Asia Foundation in implementing iterative, searching approaches to development programming. Drawing on several case studies, most notably those funded through the unique partnership between the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and The Asia Foundation, this paper adds to the current discourse on programming that is flexible and highly sensitive to context and local politics. The authors term this programming approach iterative, searching programs. The paper provides readers with a review of the diverse forms that iterative, searching programs can take and explores common features of more successful cases that will be relevant to any organization wishing to work in this way. Finally, the paper offers practical advice on the management conditions necessary to allow politically informed, searching approaches to be successful. This is the fifth paper in the Working Politically in Practice paper series.



The Asia Foundation improves lives, expands opportunities, and helps societies flourish across a dynamic and developing Asia. We work with innovative leaders and communities to build effective institutions and advance pathbreaking reforms. Together with our partners, we are committed to Asia's continued development as a peaceful, just, and thriving region of the world.