



# **FLOURISH**

**HELPING SOCIETIES FLOURISH**

IMPACT REPORT 2019



The Asia Foundation

# ASIA FOUNDATION PROGRAMS

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156

Strengthen  
Governance



93

Empower  
Women



73

Expand  
Economic  
Opportunity



38

Increase  
Environmental  
Resilience



52

Promote  
International  
Cooperation

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87%

Budget Allocated  
to Programs

80%

Staff are local  
to Asia

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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.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENT

Over the years, our long-standing Books for Asia program has reached millions of readers of all ages and sectors of society, equipping students, professionals, and policymakers with tools and resources to contribute effectively to their country's development. In the past year, the number of books we have put in the hands of children, emerging leaders, and adults reached nine million, and the year's contributions brought the total number of books donated since the program began to more than 52 million. Books for Asia was recently honored by the U.S. Library of Congress Literacy Awards for innovative literacy promotion. In many remote, conflict-affected regions, books and literature are scarce. Our new Books for Asia digital initiative — *Let's Read* — now allows children to read books for free on a mobile phone or tablet wherever they are and in their own languages.

Through this initiative, we are contributing to a love of reading for children, while at the same time building a rapidly expanding network of young authors, illustrators, and translators equipped to create quality digital books in dozens of languages. They are developing skills and contemporary avenues to publishing, while forming a new culture of literature and learning in places where it has been largely absent.

Bringing together new modes of thinking, approaches, and tools with the drive and

passion of young people and investing in their future is an enduring characteristic of The Asia Foundation's work. In Afghanistan, for example, we are preparing Afghan girls in Kandahar province for the national public university entrance exam. Last year, 78 percent of girls who received this support passed the exam and gained entry to a four-year national university.

In the Malaysian state of Sabah, where young people are often recruited as innocent participants in criminal syndicates, we reached hundreds of potentially at-risk youth through cultural and football camps, short-circuiting a destructive cycle and providing alternative possibilities in a place where such options are in short supply.

In China, domestic giving skyrocketed in 2008 after the devastating Sichuan earthquake, marking a turning point for Chinese philanthropy which was limited until then. In this emerging sector, The Asia Foundation is working with China Foundation Center, providing technical assistance to improve effective grantmaking to civil society organizations. These are just a few examples that illustrate the strategic and nuanced investments the Foundation is making in a dynamic Asia. These thoughtful, complex investments continue to set us apart. But our work is only possible because of dedicated friends and supporters like you. Thank you.



**David Arnold**  
President and  
Chief Executive Officer



**Sunder Ramaswamy**  
Chairman of the Board  
and Executive Committee



# HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR IMPACT ACROSS ASIA THIS YEAR



## AFGHANISTAN

*Educating women and girls*  
120+ Afghan schools, 12,000 female teachers and students trained in science, mathematics, and computer literacy.

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## CAMBODIA

*Atlas of Gender and Environment*  
60 interactive maps provide data on ways climate change and disasters impact women and men in Cambodia.



## BANGLADESH

*Promoting peace and tolerance*  
Mobilized 11 Early Response Unit members, 15 lead peacekeepers, and 78 community peacekeepers.

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## CHINA

*Local Philanthropy sector growing*  
Promoted grantmaking to CSOs to sustain diversity of China's civil society; 61,000+ utilized grantmaking website.



## INDIA

*Cross-border cooperation  
on water*

Equipped 200 elected women from local government and female political party leaders to improve community resilience to frequent floods.

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## KOREA

*Storybooks in 10 languages  
for migrant children*

Wrote and published seven new bilingual books, created 5,000 new hard-copy books, and provided unlimited access to our *Let's Read* digital library.

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## MALAYSIA

*Countering violent extremism*

In border communities vulnerable to recruitment, engaged 200+ at-risk youth, trained 109 community paralegals and 49 community police.



## INDONESIA

*Advocating for the marginalized*  
3,100+ indigenous people secured their national ID cards and birth certificates.

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## LAOS

*Empowering citizens to know  
and protect their legal rights*  
Provided legal aid and services to 14,000+ people, and legal counsel to 255 people in four provinces.

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## MONGOLIA

*Improving quality of life  
for urban residents*  
Developed first-ever training framework for 3,270+ civil servants to improve access to services.



## MYANMAR

*Advancing debate  
on conflict solutions*

Trained 230+ peace process stakeholders, including 10 ethnic armed organizations, to advance policy solutions.

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## PACIFIC ISLAND NATIONS

*Online platforms where businesses  
access APEC economies*

24-hour app building competition bringing 14 teams of software developers and designers together from nine APEC economies.

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## PHILIPPINES

*Coalitions for Change*

Supported changes in transport infrastructure, broadband internet, education, credible elections, and security sector resulting in 38 reforms and 15 new policies.



## NEPAL

*Connecting migrant workers  
to resources*

Provided financial access points, mobile course materials, and job information, reaching 527,000+ through mobile devices and 15,000+ viewers/day through social media.

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## PAKISTAN

*Vote First for first-time voters*

Campaign to encourage citizens to participate at the ballot, especially young voters and women, executed 21 election workshops in 9 districts for 2,200+ participants.

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## SINGAPORE

*YSEALI SUMMIT*

Implemented YSEALI (Young Southeast Asian Leadership Initiative) Summit for 150 innovators and entrepreneurs from the U.S. and ASEAN to connect with each other and experts.



## SRI LANKA

### *Gender-sensitive police stations*

Supported community-policing training for 568 Officers-In-Charge and a national workshop on gender-based violence to 42 Divisional Commanders.

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## TIMOR-LESTE

### *Protecting women and children*

Supported court monitoring and advocacy through the Nabilan Program, including legal aid for 2000+ clients.



## THAILAND

### *U.S.-Thai Bilateral*

Organized Track 1.5 dialogue led by former Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai and former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State and Ambassador Stapleton Roy.

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## VIETNAM

### *Mobile banking for women business owners*

Supported digital financial services in remote areas via text to 4.9 million, initiating process of mobile bank transactions.

Read our stories at [asiafoundation.org](https://asiafoundation.org)

learn more, follow our progress, & support our programs

**asiafoundation.org**



#ChangeStartsHere

#VentureWithHer

#MoveToTheFrontlines

#ReadersIntoLeaders



**The Asia Foundation**