

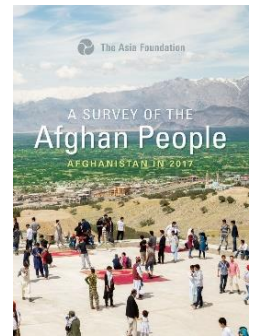


Fall 2017

In this issue: 2017 Survey of the Afghan People, Technology, Lotus Circle, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Bangladesh

Upcoming Events

November 14 – The Foundation will release the 2017 [Survey of the Afghan People](#), the 13th annual survey of more than 10,000 Afghan citizens. The launch, co-hosted with the United States Institute of Peace, includes a presentation of the survey findings and a discussion of the trends in citizens' views on issues including security, the economy, essential services, corruption, justice, youth issues, reconciliation with the Taliban, access to media, gender equality and governance and political participation. Click [here](#) for more information on our Afghanistan program.



November 15 – The Foundation's [Women's Empowerment Program](#) will host an event on "[Women in Afghan Society: Key Findings from A Survey of the Afghan People 2017](#)". This event will share the findings of the 2017 [Survey of the Afghan People](#) that sheds new light on the crucial roles women play in Afghan society and provide comparative data on women's and men's attitudes towards women's rights, gender equality, the economy, the national mood, and security issues in Afghanistan.

Recent Events

September 20 – The Foundation, in partnership with the World Bank's Blockchain Lab, hosted an event at the Bank's headquarters titled "[Rewiring for Digital Transformation: How Online Platforms and Blockchain are Redefining Development and Changing the Rules of the Game](#)." The forum presented speakers from different industries that discussed the integration of online tools and technologies to achieve sustainable development results. Please click [here](#) for more information on our technology programs.

October 12 – The Foundation launched [The State of Conflict and Violence in Asia](#), which contains evidence-based analyses of historical patterns and current trends in conflict and violence in 14 Asian countries. Co-authors [Patrick Barron](#) and Sana Jaffrey discussed the country reports and five thematic expert essays focusing on inter-communal violence, gender-based violence, land and natural resource conflicts, cross-border insurgency and terrorism, and the links between conflict and regime type. Watch the event [here](#) and learn more about our conflict programs [here](#).



Asia Foundation President David D. Arnold presents the 2017 Lotus Leadership Award to Amartya Sen.

October 12 – In New York City, the [Lotus Circle](#) and the Asia Foundation presented [Lotus Leadership Awards](#) to Amartya Sen, an Indian Nobel Prize-winning economist and philosopher, and to The Henry Luce Foundation, a New York non-profit, recognized for its outstanding commitment to leadership development and supporting women as visible and active leaders.

October 17 – The Foundation organized a half day event on "[Assessing Reform in Myanmar: A Discussion of Peace and Policymaking](#)". The two panel discussions assessed the implications of national policy-making and

international development assistance on the ongoing peace process in Myanmar and its vision for internal reform. Read the key findings of the study “[The Contested Areas of Myanmar: Subnational Conflict, Aid, and Development](#),” [here](#).

October 23-30 – The Foundation convened a series of panels in Washington, D.C., New York, and the San Francisco Bay Area that featured young Asian leaders who participated in the “[Asian Views on America’s Role in Asia](#)” project. The speakers shared their views on the challenges and opportunities for Asia’s next generation, and the role the United States can play in supporting Asian societies benefit from their emerging future.



The Future of Asia panel discussion in Washington, D.C.

October 31 – [George Varughese](#), the Asia Foundation’s country representative in Nepal, provided his on-the-ground perspective on the current Nepali political context, and discussed some of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead as the country gears up for provincial and national/federal elections in November-December 2017. Read more about our Nepal program [here](#).

In the News

[Pakistan’s Water Crisis: Why a National Water Policy is Needed](#)



Women gather water at a central drinking pump. Severe water scarcity in Pakistan is already having a negative impact on the country’s public health and the economy, with over 80 percent of water supplied in the country is considered unsafe. Photo/Hisaar Foundation

Pakistan is among the world’s 36 most [water-stressed countries](#) despite being home to the world’s largest glaciers. The Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) warned in 2016 that [the country may run dry by 2025](#) if the government did not take any immediate action. Pakistan’s water crisis poses a threat to the country’s future security, stability, and sustainability, and requires immediate coordinated planning and implementation to avert a disaster. The Asia Foundation is supporting the [Hisaar Foundation](#), a local organization in Pakistan, to develop a series of recommendations to guide the framework of a national water policy focused on improving access to water for the poor and landless, financing the urban and rural water value chain, safeguarding the Indus Basin and its infrastructure, improving water institutions and their management and governance, and building a base for science, technology, and social aspects of water. Read more about the Asia Foundation’s programs in Pakistan [here](#).

Notes from the Field

[Financial Inclusion for Women Entrepreneurs](#)



Over 30 percent of all small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in emerging markets are women owned and operated but continue to have lower than average growth rates compared to SMEs run by men. Photo/Geoffrey Hiller

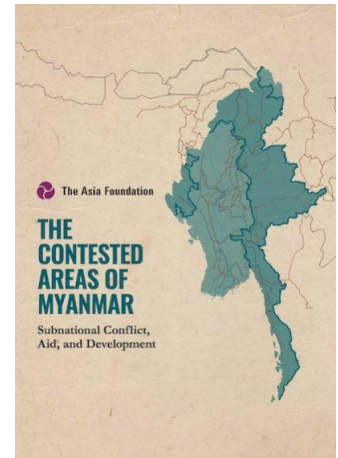
Over 30 percent of all small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in emerging markets are women owned and operated but continue to have lower than average growth rates compared to SMEs run by men. Women in developing countries still face difficulties in obtaining loans to start or grow their business and lack access to financial services such as a bank account, as reported by the [Global Findex Database](#). The study “[Women’s Access to Finance – Bangladesh](#),” produced by the Asia Foundation and the University of Dhaka’s Center on Budget and Policy (CBP) provides insights into the supply and demand-side barriers that affect access to credit by women entrepreneurs, including poor policy implementation and capacity constraints. Read more from [Syed A. Al-Muti](#), Associate Director of Asia Foundation’s Economic

Development Program in [Bangladesh](#), [here](#) and from Amy Warren, Asia Foundation's Program Officer for Economic Development, [here](#).

Publications of Interest

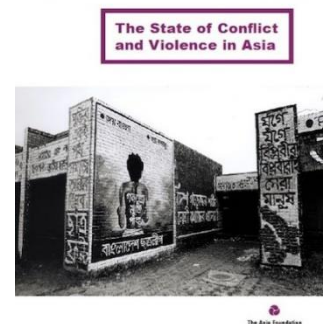
[The Contested Areas of Myanmar: Subnational Conflict, Aid, and Development](#)

Far from being a problem restricted to the periphery, Myanmar's subnational conflicts are widespread and shape many of the country's most pressing national challenges. Subnational conflicts directly affect up to one-quarter of the population. For more than half a century they have severely impacted the entire country's political trajectory, economic growth, and human development. To contribute to the ongoing dialogue on how to encourage Myanmar's political transition, the country's development, and ultimately prospects for peace, the Asia Foundation carried out a year-long study leading to this report, which draws on the rich expertise of contributing researchers and analysts and builds upon the Foundation's 2013 publication, [The Contested Corners of Asia: Subnational Conflict and International Development Assistance](#).



[The State of Conflict and Violence in Asia](#)

In response to critical gaps in existing conflict data, *The State of Conflict and Violence in Asia* presents a concise, evidence-based overview of the complexity of violence in 14 Asian countries, including some of the most entrenched and complex places in the world. Drawing on the Asia Foundation's own long-standing experience in each country, the volume reports historical patterns and current trends in conflict and violence, combining analysis of published materials with in-depth knowledge and nuanced understanding of local politics and power. Required reading for policymakers, development practitioners, security analysts, and business leaders, this book provides an accurate and timely picture of conflict, violence, and peacebuilding in Asia today.



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.