



## May 2018

**In this issue:** Gender Justice in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, 2018 Development Fellows, Technology and Development, Disaster Management in China, Empowering Women, ASEAN Cybersecurity Cooperation, and Policymaking in Myanmar

## Upcoming Event

**June 14**— [Ramani Jayasundere](#), the Asia Foundation’s director of justice and gender in [Sri Lanka](#), will share lessons, experiences and insights from the Foundation’s projects to strengthen gender sensitivity within Sri Lanka’s formal justice system, and advance justice for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). Event details will be sent via an invitation email soon. Read more about our work on gender-based violence and women’s empowerment [here](#).

## Recent Events

**May 15** — [Sara L. Taylor](#), the Asia Foundation’s county representative in [Bangladesh](#), provided an update on recent and upcoming developments, challenges and opportunities in the country in light of a number of pressing issues such as the upcoming local and national elections, the Rohingya refugee situation, and climate change and other environmental factors.

## Leadership Development and Exchange

[The 2018 Development Fellows](#), representing 11 Asian countries, gathered for a week in Seoul for an intensive Leadership Development Workshop in April, presented in partnership with the [Korea Development Institute](#). The Fellows then traveled together from South Korea to Sri Lanka where they engaged with development practitioners to understand the mechanics of change on the ground. The program in Asia was capped by the *2018 Forum on Leadership for Asia’s Future: At the Frontlines of Change*, attended by over 70 representatives from the first 5 cohorts of the Development Fellows, along with other young and inspirational changemakers from across Asia, to address shared development challenges, build and deepen networks of support, and highlight creative avenues for innovation and collaboration. Catch glimpses from the events on Facebook [here](#) and [here](#), and learn more about our exchange programs [here](#).



*All 5 cohorts of The Asia Foundation Development Fellows gathered at the 2018 Forum on Leadership for Asia’s Future on April 28th in Singapore. Photo/Amanda Bense*

## Technology and Development

### [How Mobile Tech is Making Migration More Secure and Less Costly](#)



*Migrant laborers prepare to depart Nepal at Kathmandu’s Tribhuvan International Airport, heading to countries in the Arab Gulf including Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Photo/Conor Ashleigh*

The Asia Foundation’s [Shuvayatra \(“Safe Journey”\) project](#) in Nepal uses a mobile-first “platform” approach to address serious information gaps between migrants and the providers of important services that can help migrants undertake the process safely and productively. Employment in wealthy economies abroad can be a huge economic opportunity, even for workers in low-skilled jobs like domestic work or construction. However, pursuit of these economic opportunities often places prospective migrants into a system where exploitation is rife and information is highly asymmetric. The Shuvayatra platform not only allows migrants to locate crucial information and service providers that they might otherwise never encounter but also connects many

different stakeholders in Nepal's migration ecosystem who are trying to better reach migrants and convey useful information. Learn more about our [technology and development](#) programs in Asia and our country programs in [Nepal](#).

## Notes from the Field

### [10 Years after Wenchuan Earthquake, A Silver Lining in Disaster Management](#)

May 12 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the devastating [Wenchuan earthquake](#) that struck Sichuan province in China, leaving more than 69,000 people dead and over 40 million affected. The earthquake catalyzed improvements to China's disaster management architecture and made Chinese civil society organizations (CSOs) an integral part of disaster preparedness and response. Response to the Lushan earthquake in April 2013, revealed a quicker and well-equipped response to the disaster, including investment in the affected area's long-term recovery and disaster-resilience capacity. The critical role of CSOs in disaster management has also been emphasized in the Chinese government's 2016-2020 "National Comprehensive Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Plan," in local government procurement of CSO services to train local communities in disaster management, and in various initiatives of the Asia Foundation, as in a [seminal project](#) to improve the capacity of the community to respond to disasters. A massive government reorganization plan issued in March 2018 plans to set up [a new Ministry of Emergency Management](#) specializing in preventing and mitigating various hazards, including disasters and incidents. Learn about the Asia Foundations programs in [China](#).



*Responders learn how to splint a fracture during an Asia Foundation CERT Training in Nanning.*

### [Finding Hidden Potential Within Bangladesh's Garment Factories](#)



*Bangladesh's garment sector employs around 3.6 million workers and attracts thousands of rural residents, many of whom are women. Photo/Conor Ashleigh*

Asian University for Women's (AUW) [Pathways for Promise program](#) in Chittagong, Bangladesh is an intensive, five-year undergraduate program designed to attract students from communities that remain underserved, including Ready-Made Garments (RMG) workers, Rohingya ethnic minorities and daughters of Grameen Bank borrowers. Most women working in garment factories come from low-income areas, are vulnerable to abuse, and often single women in a society dominated by strong gender hierarchies. Mowmita Basak, one of the AUW's first graduates and a 2015 [Asia Foundation Development Fellow](#), was tasked with recruiting women working in garment factories and convincing factory owners to continue paying wages while the women study, as most women had children and were the sole earners in their households. The first batch of 60 students joined AUW in March 2016 and today, it has over 100 students enrolled in Pathways who are living their dream of pursuing higher education in hopes of a better tomorrow.

Learn about the Asia Foundation's programs on [empowering women](#).

## In the News

### [Why ASEAN Needs to Invest More in Cybersecurity](#)



*ASEAN is the world's fastest growing internet region, with the user base forecasted to reach 480 million people by 2020, making it a prime target for cyber-attacks. Photo/Flickr user ADB*

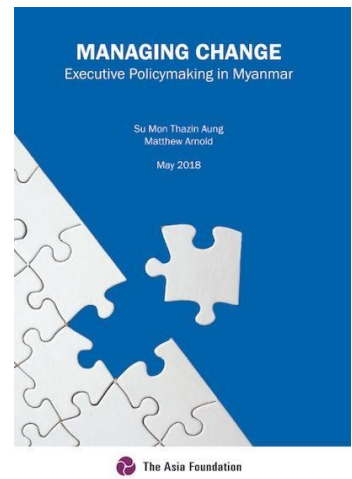
The [32nd annual ASEAN Summit in Singapore](#) concluded with the heads of states adding [cybersecurity cooperation](#) to their urgent agenda issues, among other deliverables, as the region continues to be the fastest growing internet region in the world, with the user base forecasted to reach 480 million people by 2020. Digitalization in Southeast Asia has important economic implications with online spending expected to grow six-fold to \$200 billion by 2025. Investment in cybersecurity is required to prevent threats like cyberterrorism, cyber fraud and identity theft, and to improve investor confidence in the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). A [report from AT Kearney](#) recommends that ASEAN increase spending on cybersecurity by 0.35 to 0.61 percent of its collective GDP (\$171 billion) between 2017 and 2025 to prevent cyber-attacks. During the Summit, the Asia Foundation, in partnership with the US Embassy in Singapore, convened a "Practitioners Workshop on Cybersecurity in ASEAN" from April 19-20, bringing together representatives from different sectors to discuss potential solutions to the most pressing problems of regional

cybersecurity cooperation in ASEAN. Learn about the Asia Foundation's programs on [international cooperation](#) and read more from [John J. Brandon](#), senior director for the Foundation's international relations programs in Washington, DC, [here](#).

## Publications of Interest

### [Managing Change: Executive Policymaking in Myanmar](#)

This report is an introduction to policymaking in Myanmar, focusing on policymaking by the executive branch of the Union government in Nay Pyi Taw and detailing the key actors and processes that define policymaking in the country. Its primary goal is to contribute to a robust public discourse on how policymaking actors and processes in the country can be strengthened, without which it will be difficult for Myanmar to catalyze and sustain a host of reforms critical to democratic governance, economic growth, and peace. The report concludes with recommendations on how policymaking can be strengthened to better support reform. Learn more about our country programs in [Myanmar](#) and about our programs in [strengthening governance](#) in Asia.



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.