



The Asia Foundation



Happy New Year 2024! Welcome to The Asia Foundation's Washington, D.C. January newsletter. This first issue of the year features the recent **Indonesian delegation visit**, an InAsia blog post **sharing predictions for the year ahead in Asia and the Pacific**, an InAsia podcast episode about **dancing on the line between art and activism** with two 2023 Asia Foundation Development Fellows, and **a program snapshot of our Subnational Governance Program in Nepal**, as well as recent publications on **community-level access to justice in Timor-Leste**, and **building enabling environments for women in trade in India**.

Events

Recent Event - Indonesia Delegation Visit



In December 2023, The Asia Foundation's [regional and international relations](#) program, in cooperation with the [Office of Global Initiatives in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Northern Illinois University](#) hosted a delegation of 19 members from the Secretariat of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR-RI). The delegation was led by Dr. Ir. Indra Iskandar, Secretary General. The daylong program featured discussions on the United States Congress and the policy making process, the role of interest groups in the policy making process, the role of Congress in foreign policy and national security, and challenges to democracy in the United States and globally. Following their day with The Asia Foundation, the delegation embarked on a two-week legislative and management training program across Washington, D.C. and Illinois organized by Northern Illinois University where they met with Members of Congress, academics and more.

Voices from the Field



[Asia in 2024: Elections, Economics, and Geopolitics](#)

Every January, we ask our country representatives in Asia and the Pacific to share their predictions for the year ahead. While prediction is an uncertain art, their forecasts suggest that 2024 will be a year dominated by elections, economics, and geopolitics. Read [this InAsia blog post](#) to get a country-by-country look at the news of 2024, *before* it happens.



[Dancing on the Line between Art and Activism](#)

Feminist activist [Shazia Usman](#), who now works for the UN, is a celebrated author from Fiji. [Jan Mikael de Lara Co](#), formerly head of communications for the Liberal Party of the Philippines, is also a published poet. In this episode of the [InAsia podcast](#), the two 2023 Asia Foundation Development Fellows discuss their respective journeys into activism and political communication. Learn more about the Foundation's programs in [leadership and exchange](#), and the [Pacific Islands](#).



[Fostering Strategic Partnerships for Effective and Inclusive Subnational Governance in Nepal](#)

In December 2023, our Subnational Governance Program in Nepal supported Damak Municipality in hosting the third Municipal Roundtable, convening elected representatives from the program's seven strategic partner municipalities for learning and sharing. The roundtable aims to unite strategic partner municipalities to learn, share, and document knowledge around good governance and best practices for

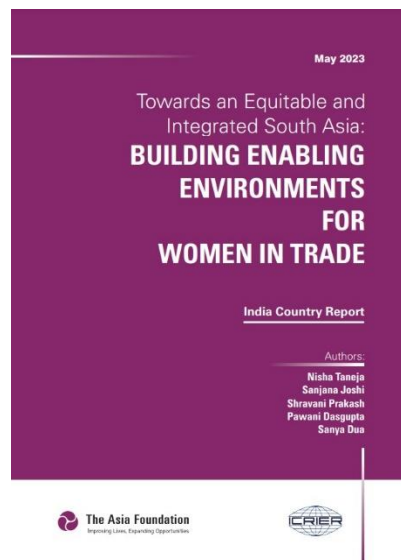
creating effective and inclusive public services. [This program snapshot](#) highlights the proceedings from this event. Learn about the Foundation's programs in [Nepal](#), and on [good governance](#).

Recent Publications



[Local Justice in Timor-Leste: Barriers to Access at the Community Level](#)

Most people in Timor-Leste resolve their justice problems outside of formal state-based courts and resort to local justice systems. While local justice systems are considered faster and more understandable for people and communities than court proceedings, important barriers still limit access to local justice. This report offers a justice ecosystems approach that acknowledges the diverse ways people access justice, and details some of the risks and opportunities to engage with local justice systems. It makes recommendations on how to ensure better protection of human rights in local justice systems, and how fostering better coordination and coherence between the courts and local justice systems could improve access to justice for all. Learn more about the Foundation's work in [Timor-Leste](#), and programs on [good governance](#), and



[Towards an Equitable and Integrated South Asia: Building Enabling Environments for Women in Trade – India Country Report](#)

This report assesses the enabling environment for women entrepreneurs in India to participate in domestic and international markets, especially the extent of women entrepreneurs' participation in South Asian markets. For this, the report identifies constraints to women entrepreneurs' participation in both the domestic and foreign markets, including South Asia, and suggests measures to enhance their participation in trade. The analyses and findings are based on desk research, secondary data, and online stakeholder consultations with two associations, the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) and the Federation of Indian Women Entrepreneurs (FIWE). In addition, separate meetings with several of the attendees were held for follow-up questions to gain a deeper

[law and justice.](#)

understanding of the ground-level issues related to barriers faced by women entrepreneurs. Learn about the Foundation's programs in [India](#) and supporting [inclusive economic growth](#).



The Asia Foundation

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives and expanding opportunities across Asia and the Pacific. Informed by 70 years of experience and deep local knowledge, our work is focused on governance, climate action, gender equality, education and leadership, inclusive growth, and international cooperation. We work in more than 20 countries through our 17 permanent country offices and programs across Asia and the Pacific, supported by a headquarters in San Francisco and an office in Washington, DC. Our funding comes from a diverse array of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.

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