



The Asia Foundation



Welcome to TAF DC's September newsletter. This latest issue includes our upcoming event on the **Pacific Islands**, the most recent **InAsia podcast episodes about South Korea and Vietnam**, the latest **InAsia blog posts about technology in Southeast Asia and data-driven policymaking in Cambodia**, and TAF's two most recent **GovAsia** and **Let's Read Mongolia** publications.

Events

**Development Challenges
in the Indo-Pacific: Focus**



In the Indo-Pacific: Focus on Pacific Islands



Sept. 21, 2022, 9:00am EDT – The [Pacific Islands](#) occupy a vast oceanic region that covers almost 20 percent of the Earth’s surface and is home to the world’s largest concentration of microstates. While Pacific Islands countries vary widely in population, economic circumstances, development, political status, and stability, they face several common challenges, each amplified by the devastating impact of the Covid pandemic. Join [Sandra Kraushaar](#), the Foundation’s Regional Representative, Pacific Islands for a virtual discussion of recent developments in the Pacific Islands and an update on the Foundation’s ongoing initiatives that support Pacific solutions to Pacific challenges through our three priority areas – navigating geopolitics and regionalism, women’s rights and leadership, and Pacific resilience. Register for the event [here](#).

Voices from the Field



[South Korea: The Paradox on the Han River](#)

[South Korea](#) has risen from one of the world’s poorest countries in the 1950s to one of the world’s richest today. It has become a leader in manufacturing and technological innovation, as well as a major pop culture powerhouse. However, many young Koreans are dissatisfied with the conditions at home and want to emigrate. Tune in to the latest episode of the [InAsia podcast](#) to hear more about this paradox from The Asia Foundation’s Country Representative in Korea, [Kwang W. Kim](#).

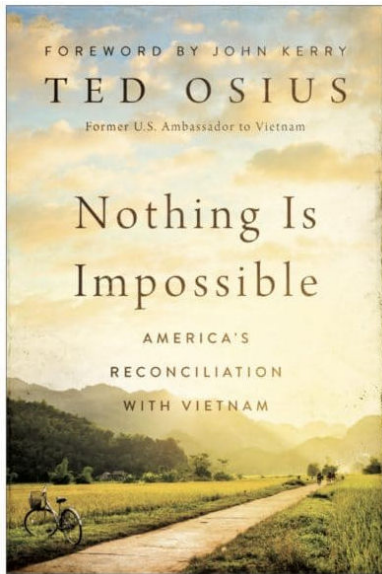


[Digital Skills for Inclusive Growth—Reaching the](#)



[Hard-to-Reach in Southeast Asia](#)

Across Southeast Asia, the digital landscape has become a contested arena, as governments and private companies seek to both drive economic growth and protect and control data flows, and as multilateral agreements advance competing visions of how to harness the digital economy for both political and economic ends. This has driven a growing digital divide between large tech companies and micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the region. The most recent [InAsia blog post](#) looks at Southeast Asia's digital problem and outlines what The Asia Foundation is doing to address these challenges. Learn more about the Foundation's work on [technology and development](#).



[Vietnam: Nothing Is Impossible: Reflections on America's Astonishing Reconciliation with Vietnam](#)

[Listen](#) to former U.S. ambassador and Asia Foundation Trustee [Ted Osius](#) discuss his new book, *Nothing Is Impossible: America's Reconciliation with Vietnam*, in which he chronicles the improbable journey of Vietnam and the United States from implacable foes to friends and partners. Learn more about the Foundation's work in [Vietnam](#).



[Data-Driven Policymaking in Cambodia: Progress and Challenges](#)

In early 2021, the [Cambodian](#) prime minister announced a third outbreak of Covid-19 with the discovery of 32 cases of community transmission. By the end of the year, Cambodia's vaccination rate reached 85%, one of the

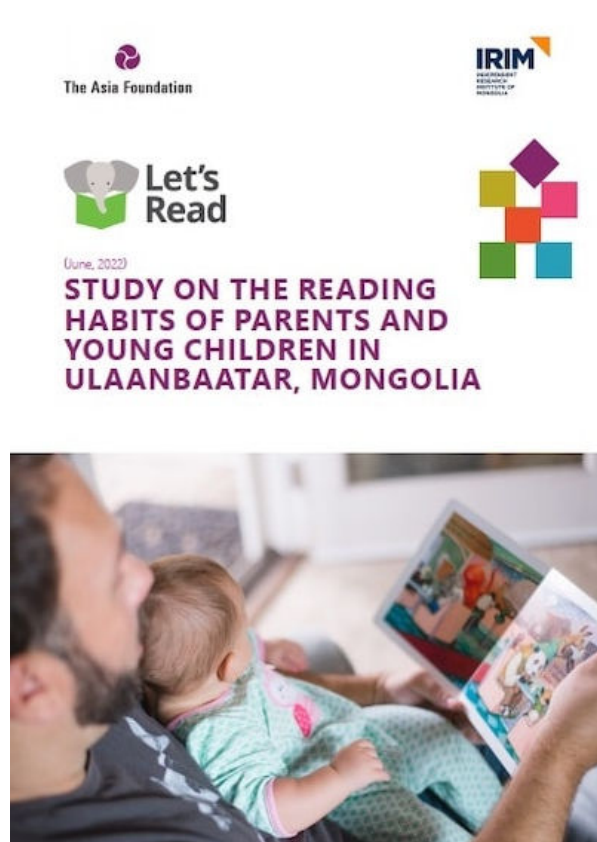
world's highest, and the prime minister announced the country "fully open." What was the key to Cambodia's success? Read the latest [InAsia insight](#) to learn about how Cambodia is utilizing data-driven policymaking to address Covid-19 and other issues.

Recent Publications



[GovAsia – Rollout: Reflections on Covid-19 Vaccination Programs in Lower Middle Income Asia](#)

This issue of [GovAsia](#) explores four key challenges faced by several lower-middle income countries (LMICs) in Asia as they embarked upon massive universal vaccination campaigns in response to Covid-19. The publication examines issues related to vaccine shortages; how global supply inequities impacted 11 Asian LMICs;



[Study on the Reading Habits of Parents and Young Children in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia](#)

In September 2021, The Asia Foundation introduced its [Let's Read Mongolia](#) Initiative to promote reading and improved education outcomes, with funding from the [Lorinet Foundation](#). The initiative aims to encourage reading with young children and increase the availability of high-quality Mongolian language children's books. The

difficulties in rolling out vaccines equitably; and the ongoing challenge of vaccine hesitancy among populations. In unpacking these challenges, the authors hope to seed the reflection and dialogue needed for a better pandemic response and greater resilience in the future.

Asia Foundation worked with the Independent Research Institute of Mongolia (IRIM) to conduct a baseline study in early 2022. The survey collected data on the reading habits of parents with children aged 0-5, the accessibility and availability of books for children at home and kindergarten, and perceptions of the importance of reading books for the development of children.



The Asia Foundation

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Informed by six decades of experience and deep local expertise, our work across the region addresses five overarching goals—strengthen governance, empower women, expand economic opportunity, increase environmental resilience, and promote regional cooperation

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