

# STRATEGY

ROADMAP FOR A CHANGING ASIA

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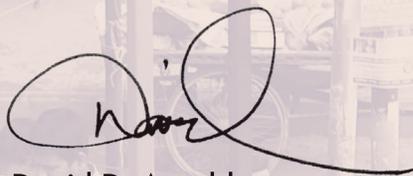


**The Asia Foundation**

Improving Lives, Expanding Opportunities

The devastating events of the past year have shown the importance of The Asia Foundation's mission of improving lives and expanding opportunities, even in times of great uncertainty. This Strategic Plan is a recommitment to that mission, and to the Foundation's core values. It is also a blueprint for a productive way forward for an organization that has left its mark on millions of lives, ensuring a better future for individuals, families, and communities throughout Asia. As the past year's global health crisis unfolded, our longstanding regional presence and strong local partnerships enabled the Foundation to work quickly and effectively to address critical social, economic, and political challenges posed by the pandemic. Our flexibility and strength as an organization will be further tested as we rise to meet the complex challenges in the years ahead including political changes and upheavals in countries such as Myanmar and Afghanistan.

As The Asia Foundation approaches its 70th anniversary, the needs and challenges facing Asia today are new, but the Foundation's role as a trusted partner in Asia's development continues to be greatly valued on the ground, including by government, private sector, and civil society donors and partners. To ensure a clarity of purpose, the Foundation must continually examine and adapt our approach, goals, and strategies, adjust our operations and staffing to widely varying local conditions, and seek out appropriate sources of support. With these goals in mind, and drawing on the insights and expertise of in-house staff as well as external experts, we undertook a year-long strategic planning process in 2020 aimed at charting our future goals, approach, and institutional development over the next five years. The product of this comprehensive review and forward-looking process is The Asia Foundation's Strategy2025, highlights of which are outlined below.



David D. Arnold  
President

# REGIONAL TRENDS

Profound structural changes will transform geopolitics, global governance, and the global economic order over the next decade with Asia at the center. Major issues and trends shaping the environment for the Foundation's programs, operations, and funding over the next five years, in addition to the far-reaching impacts of the global Covid-19 pandemic, include:

- Geopolitical competition
- Structural economic shifts
- The China story
- Technological transformation
- Climate change and environmental degradation
- Governance: political stagnation, societies under stress
- An evolving development cooperation and funding landscape

## RESPONDING TO THE REGION'S DYNAMISM

The changing regional context, together with shifts in the donor environment, require the Foundation to continually adjust and adapt its programs to address critical gaps and new development challenges. Particular attention will be given to emerging focus areas of **digital skills, workforce development, STEM education, and "the future of work"; policy reforms to meet the needs of advanced middle-income countries (AMICs); increasing alignment of donor countries' foreign policy goals and development assistance strategies; and the growing role of private sector development actors and impact investors.**

### Programs

In order to meet the critical issues facing the region, the Foundation will focus on the following key program areas: **Good Governance; Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality; Inclusive Economic Growth; Environment and Climate Action; and Regional and International Relations.** The Foundation will continue its work in **Technology;**

**Leadership and Exchanges; and Books for Asia/Let's Read** in order to bridge the digital divide, support emerging leaders, increase literacy, and improve access to information.

### Strategies

In designing and implementing programs, the Foundation will draw on key strategies that define and distinguish us as a trusted partner, facilitator, and innovator in Asia and the Pacific: **nurturing leadership; informing public policy; strengthening institutions; expanding access to information; mainstreaming gender; leveraging technology; forging strategic partnerships; and advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

### Geographic Focus

The Asia Foundation by design works **on the ground, is uniquely responsive to changing priorities, needs, and concerns** in each country, and anchored in long-lasting trusted



relationships with key leaders and partners. We will adapt and adjust our approach and strategies to evolving legal and regulatory constraints, funding availability, and security challenges.

### Business Model

The evolving international donor environment presents an opportunity to generate resources from an array of public entities, philanthropists, and the private sector. A priority is to increase unrestricted resources, expand private fundraising efforts, and explore market-based and blended-finance programs through a new Asia Foundation Social Ventures initiative.

### Operational Excellence

Strategy2025 prioritizes enhancements in our project management systems, technology and information management, and enterprise risk-management approach. Staff engagement efforts will focus on creating a culture of inclusion and shared learning through enhanced internal communications, training, and professional development.

### Conclusion

Building on the Foundation's long, successful history in Asia, Strategy2025 provides for the continuity of work aligned with our core mission and proven expertise and anticipates needs and opportunities for new dimensions of programming. It articulates the imperative to invest in our vital human capital and improve our operational systems to ensure that the Foundation continues to create measurable and lasting impact.

# ASIA FOUNDATION STRATEGY 2025

PROGRAM PILLARS	OUTCOMES	
<b>Good Governance</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficient, effective government systems, structures, services</li> <li>• Transparent, accountable institutions</li> <li>• Inclusive, participatory governance mechanisms</li> <li>• Accessible, just legal systems, services, and decision-making</li> <li>• Effective conflict mitigation strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase political voice, leadership</li> <li>• Increase opportunities for education, employment, entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Improve rights and security; reduce gender-based violence</li> <li>• Increase role in peacebuilding and climate action</li> <li>• Greater equity, inclusion, opportunities for vulnerable groups</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive Economic Growth</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand reading and digital literacy skills, education reform, STEM, and workforce development</li> <li>• Improve business environment for private sector growth, job creation</li> <li>• Strengthen policy measures for growth in Advanced Middle-Income Countries</li> <li>• Increase societal benefits through entrepreneurship, partnerships, innovation</li> </ul>
<b>Environment and Climate Action</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase focus on environment/climate change in development strategies</li> <li>• Increase cross-sectoral cooperation in natural resource management, disaster risk reduction, environmental conflict mitigation</li> <li>• Increase public and private investment in clean energy, sustainable infrastructure, and green growth</li> </ul>
<b>Regional and International Relations</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase multi-country cooperation on regional and transboundary issues</li> <li>• Increase U.S.-Asia cooperation in international affairs</li> <li>• Enhance foreign policy capacity in select Asia-Pacific countries</li> <li>• Improve understanding, accountability, performance in Asian development cooperation</li> </ul>
<b>Program Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nurture Leadership</li> <li>• Inform Public Policy</li> <li>• Strengthen Institutions</li> <li>• Expand Access to Information</li> <li>• Mainstream Gender</li> <li>• Leverage Technology</li> <li>• Forge Strategic Partnerships</li> <li>• Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion</li> </ul>	
<b>Our Mission</b>	<p>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.</p>	
<b>Our Values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust and partnership</li> <li>• Inclusion of differing views</li> <li>• Longstanding presence and commitment</li> <li>• Deep respect for local context</li> <li>• Innovating and adapting for impact</li> </ul>	



**The Asia Foundation**

#ChangeStartsHere