

Cambodia

The Asia Foundation is committed to developing programs in Cambodia to ensure the development and growth of the country and its people and has established in-country presence in Cambodia with programs running for over 40 years. With a current operating budget of about USD \$4 million and an office size of 28 staff comprising mostly of Cambodian nationals, the Foundation's programs leverage the use of technology to empower women and youth, strengthen governance, promote international cooperation, and build environmental resilience for a prosperous Cambodia.



GOOD GOVERNANCE

The Foundation focuses on strengthening relationships with state and non-state actors at the national and subnational level, connecting policy makers to evidence-based and informed policy options, and improving delivery of inclusive public services. With support from the Australian government, the Foundation is implementing the Ponlok Chomnes: Data and Dialogue for Development in Cambodia program to promote the knowledge sector and has partnered with key research institutions and think tanks in the country such as the Cambodia Research Development Institute (CDRI), the Cambodian Institute for Peace and Cooperation (CICP), Future Forum and others. The program supports research, and hosts policy

talks on topics regarding Cambodia's growth and development, convening knowledge sector actors and key stakeholders.

The Foundation's work with the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs-funded Local Budgeting and Citizen Participation in Local Budgeting program at the district level focuses on improved citizen engagement with commune councilors on issues of local budgets. The Foundation is grateful to the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD) for their guidance and support to this program.

The Foundation also engages actively with the NCDD Secretariat and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) of the Implementing Social

Accountability Framework (ISAF), which originated from the NCDD-S and aims to improve local service delivery through enhanced accountability. The Foundation is involved as a member of the ISAF governance structure, serving as deputy chair of the demand-side Partnership Steering Committee (PSC). The Foundation is also a delivery partner under the Partnerships for Infrastructure (P4I), an Australian government initiative to contribute to quality infrastructure development that drives inclusive growth in Southeast Asia.

With USAID support through a U.S. based small business, the Foundation is implementing the Solid Waste Accountability Platform (SWAP) program which aims to improve solid waste management outcomes in Kampong Cham, Steung Saen, and Siem Reap by developing waste management solutions through a better understanding of collection practices using technology. This program intersects with the Foundation's broad work on environmental resilience. On this front, the Foundation was selected for a new technical assistance project by GIZ which aims to achieve sustainable improvements in solid waste management (SWM) in Kratie province, Cambodia.

INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Asia Foundation programs focus on enhancing digital system management and competence of labor workforce and its soft-skills and enabling an economic environment in which the private sector can create enough jobs to absorb the country's growing youth demographic. With support from Google.org, the Foundation implements the Go Digital ASEAN program, a regional program including Cambodia. The initiative is designed to equip micro and small enterprises and underemployed youth, particularly those in rural and isolated areas, with crucial digital skills and tools; expand economic opportunity across ASEAN Member States; and minimize the negative impact from the Covid-19 crisis. The Foundation has worked in partnership with the Ministry of Industry, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MISTI) to train more than 11,000 MSME owners in Cambodia.

The Foundation also anchors the Women in Tek Network (WTN) which was established with the support from Pact's WE ACT program, funded by USAID to work with female tech entrepreneurs. WTN aims to provide a needs-based, timely, and tailor-made set of integrated activities to support young women entrepreneurs in Cambodia working in technology through networking, mentorship, and business coaching.

With support from the VISA Foundation, The Asia Foundation is also implementing Accelerate Women's Entrepreneurship and Access to Capital in Cambodia which supports women-led small and micro businesses in Cambodia and the Philippines to access markets and grow their businesses. In Cambodia, 800 such businesses are targeted across seven provinces in the agro-food and handicrafts sectors. Most recently, the Foundation, through University of California at Berkeley, started the USAID Digital Workforce Development Project to engage Higher Education Institutions and private sector partners to create a cohort of Cambodian youth with enterprise-driven skills, training, and qualifications that will help them contribute to Cambodian society and succeed in a modern digital economy.

Since 2016, the Foundation hosts the Tek4Good space, supporting tech startups in Cambodia by providing physical office space, networking, mentoring, and business coaching opportunities. And since 1955, the Foundation had distributed over one million English books to schools, NGOs, government institutions, and public libraries through the Books for Asia program with important collaboration from the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS). Recognizing advances in technology, the Foundation has now transitioned this into the Let's Read initiative since 2016, providing access to high-quality children's books in the Khmer language to children across Cambodia. The Let's Read digital library contains stories produced locally as well as translations from different parts of the world, all of which can be accessed for free. There are more than 5,000 books available for children to read, and of these almost 400 are in Khmer language.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY

Asia Foundation programs are designed to enable women to contribute economically, further their education, and prevent gender-based violence. Under the Australian-funded ACCESS program, the Foundation builds capacity of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) to provide survivors of gender-based violence with legal support. The Foundation also provides scholarships to female university students pursuing ICT and STEM degrees and is implementing a program to enhance leadership and gender equality through trainings provided to MoEYS Leadership Professional Development Program with support from UNICEF. The program aims to enhance technical and professional competencies of MoEYS women leaders and provide them with improved ability to meet the demands of their professional positions.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The Asia Foundation fosters regional and international cooperation through building national capacities in foreign affairs and promoting public diplomacy, international cooperation, and exchange. In Cambodia, the Foundation has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Institute for Diplomacy and International Relations (NIDIR). The Foundation provides support for Cambodian officials to participate in workshops and exchange programs and organizes training workshops on topics such as "Diplomatic Statecraft" to benefit young Cambodian diplomats. Most recently, in January 2022, the Foundation also partnered with CICP to launch the book, *Cambodia's Chairmanship of ASEAN: Challenging Perceptions, Concretizing Consolidations*.



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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 is focused on good governance, women's empowerment and gender equality, inclusive economic growth, environment and climate action, and regional and international relations.

Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through its network of offices in 18 Asia-Pacific countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals. In 2021, we provided \$82.7 million in direct program support and distributed textbooks and other educational materials valued at \$1.8 million.

The Asia Foundation – Cambodia

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