



## March 2019

**In this issue:** Advanced Middle-Income Countries, Let's Read! Initiative, Cambodia, China, 2019 Lotus Leadership Awards Gala, and the Philippines

## Recent Event

**March 5**— The Asia Foundation organized an event on “[Advanced Middle-Income Countries \(AMICs\) of the Indo-Pacific: The Road Ahead](#)” featuring [Chris Maloney](#) from USAID, [Sudhir Shetty](#) from the World Bank, and [William Cole](#) from the Asia Foundation. Experts discussed some of the critical economic and political challenges that lie ahead for emerging Indo-Pacific AMICs and how a well-calibrated transition to new forms of bilateral partnership may help secure their successful transition. Watch the full event [here](#).

## Technology and Development

### [The Asia Foundation Works with Community to Add Balinese to Free Digital Library for Children](#)

The Asia Foundation partnered with [BASAbali](#) to host a translation event at Balai Bahasa, the national language agency, bringing together 25 government language ambassadors, professional teachers of Balinese, and BASAbali's linguists to translate, edit, and publish 50 children's books created by Let's Read communities across Asia. The addition of books in Balinese means that children, families, and communities in Bali will be better able to experience the Book Effect. The [free digital library](#) contains more than 2,000 stories translated by communities into 20 languages and read by children and families across Asia. Learn more about the [Let's Read! initiative](#), the [Books for Asia](#) program and other country programs in [Indonesia](#).



## Notes from the Field

### [Investing in Cambodia's Adolescent Girls](#)



Mentoring activity for IAGEC students at 28 Makara School (Siem Reap Province).

One in three Cambodian girls has the opportunity to finish secondary school, and many students lack the support and the role models they need to imagine opportunities beyond their rural villages, resulting in young people with very limited career aspirations that leave their true potential unrealized. In 2017, The Asia Foundation launched *Investing in Adolescent Girls Education in Cambodia: Pathways to a Brighter Future* (IAGEC), working with local partner [Khmer Youth Association](#) (KYA) to support 410 students, 80 percent of them girls, at six remote schools in Siem Reap, Kampong Cham, and Prey Veng provinces known for their high drop-out rates and pervasive labor migration. By increasing incentives to stay in school, and by educating students about the dangers of unsafe labor migration through annual awareness campaigns, IAGEC has reduced the drop-out rate among participating students to 11 percent, compared to a national average of 19 percent. For the current generation of Cambodian youth, programs like IAGEC are an essential bridge to the country's future economic landscape built on knowledge and education. Learn more about the Foundation's work in [Cambodia](#) and [empowering women](#).

### [Curbing Sexual Harassment in China's Garment Industry](#)

Garment and textile workers are among the most vulnerable populations in China, with low wages and difficult working conditions exacerbated by a culture of gender-based discrimination and harassment, and few institutional protections. Built on The Asia Foundation's years of work protecting garment workers' rights, our Beijing office, in partnership with the [Levi Strauss Foundation](#), designed a program to systematically address sexual harassment in China's textile and apparel industry by working on three fronts: promoting industry-wide guidelines to stop workplace sexual harassment; developing stronger legal protections for survivors; and instituting employee education programs. Learn more about the Asia Foundation's programs in [China](#).



## In the News

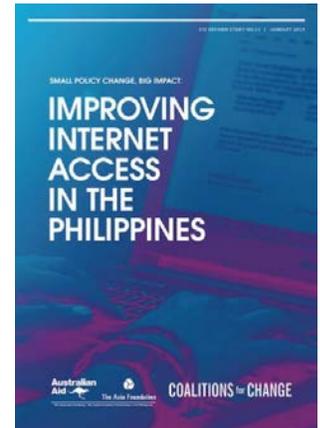
### [The Asia Foundation's 2019 Lotus Leadership Awards in New York to Honor Christiane Amanpour and SafetiPin](#)

Award-winning journalist [Christiane Amanpour](#) will be honored at the 2019 [Lotus Leadership Awards Gala](#) on Wednesday, April 3 at the Mandarin Oriental New York for her extraordinary leadership in raising the voices and stories of women worldwide. The Foundation will also recognize [SafetiPin](#), a social enterprise harnessing the power of data and technology to make Asian cities safer for women. The Awards are hosted annually by the Foundation's [Lotus Circle](#), a group of committed individuals, foundations, and corporations that advance women's rights and opportunities across Asia. Learn more about the Asia Foundation's work on [empowering women](#).

## Publication of Interest

### [Improving Internet Access in the Philippines](#)

Despite 25 years of deregulation and investments to telecommunications infrastructure, internet access remains elusive for millions of Filipinos. This publication tells the story of how Coalitions for Change and Better Broadband Alliance introduced satellite as one of the options for the government to deliver internet, especially in remote areas. Eleven months after the Free Internet Access in Public Places Act of 2017, installed internet access points have almost doubled from 807 to 1592 and is steadily growing. Learn more about the Asia Foundation's work in the [Philippines](#), on [strengthening governance](#) and the [Coalitions for Change](#) program.



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.