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# Being LGBT in Asia

Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.



*“Being LGBT in Asia” supports and builds advocacy efforts of Asia’s lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender populations.*

Photo credit: [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

“Being LGBT in Asia” is a ground-breaking, first-of-its-kind initiative to support Asia’s lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. It works to bolster basic LGBT rights across the continent and in specific focus countries including China, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. In 2014, the Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok, through the section for Regional Development Cooperation, joined the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as a lead funding partner, raising the profile of regional organizations and institutions in addressing LGBT rights issues. The program will be implemented through 2017.

## ENGAGING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

“Being LGBT in Asia” works to help Asia’s LGBT populations exercise their rights, addressing often deep seated discrimination. Program activities work through LGBT civil society engaging national and regional institutions and advocating for LGBT protective laws and policies, and the empowerment of civil society leaders. Between 2012 and 2014, USAID and UNDP implemented a landmark review and analysis of LGBT circumstances across 18 Asian countries. It found that Asia’s LGBT people suffer not only from unsupportive policies and laws, but also high levels of stigma and discrimination, affecting every aspect of LGBT people’s lives from families and the workplace to law enforcement, the media and health and education services.

## ADVOCATING FOR LGBT PROTECTIVE LAWS AND POLICIES

Key objectives include working with LGBT civil society to engage with country level institutions to advocate for LGBT protective laws and policies, and supporting community empowerment and mobilization activities. “Being LGBT in Asia” also supports multi-stakeholder dialogues on LGBT rights, promoting advocacy frameworks to address discrimination and assist in legal challenges. In doing so, “Being LGBT in Asia” mobilizes policy and operational research, and strategy development among key populations including faith-based communities and the private sector to effectively address LGBT and sexual orientation-gender identity issues.

## GENERATING PARTNERSHIPS, DIALOGUE AND UNDERSTANDING

The partnership has reviewed LGBT rights in 18 countries in Southeast and East Asia, establishing national-level dialogues and publishing reports for eight focus countries: Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. The initiative is working with the ASEAN Sexual Orientation-Gender Identity Caucus, the Asia-Pacific Transgender Network, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions. On the web, “Being LGBT in Asia” is producing LGBT information and testimonial videos on the Philippines-based B-Change web-application sites, ‘Be’ and ‘Plus,’ and has an active presence through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and China’s popular social media site, Weibo, among other online platforms.

### USAID’s “Being LGBT in Asia” webpage:

[www.usaid.gov/documents/1861/being-lgbt-asia](http://www.usaid.gov/documents/1861/being-lgbt-asia)

### UNDP’s “Being LGBT in Asia” webpage:

[www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/operations/projects/overview/being-lgbt-in-asia/](http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/operations/projects/overview/being-lgbt-in-asia/)

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