

THE 2015 ASIALINK CONVERSATIONS
WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP
SINGAPORE 9-10 DECEMBER



Cover image: HOME - Gwangju, 2012

Artists: Craig Walsh and Hiromi Tango

Exhibition: Gwangju Biennale, 7 September - 11 November 2012, South Korea

Photography: Craig Walsh

Image courtesy of the artists.

HOME - Gwangju was an Asialink Arts partnership between the Gwangju Biennale, curator Alia Swastika and the artists.

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THE ASIALINK CONVERSATIONS

The Asialink Conversations explore issues of common concern while creating new and strengthened networks in ASEAN countries and Australia. They have previously been held in Melbourne, Australia (2002); Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (2004); Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam (2006); Sydney, Australia (2007); New Delhi, India (2008); Phnom Penh, Cambodia (2010); Yangon, Myanmar (2012); and Hiroshima, Japan (2014). The 2015 Asialink Conversations are a collaboration with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and the Centre for ASEAN Regionalism at the University of Malaya. Asialink Diplomacy thanks its major sponsor, the 2009 Myer Commemorative Grants Program and supporting sponsor, The University of Melbourne.

ASIALINK

For 25 years Asialink has been at the forefront of Australia's engagement with the Asian region. Founded in 1990 as an initiative of the Myer Foundation, Asialink reaches across the fields of Business, Arts, Education, Health and Track II Diplomacy to provide greater understanding and enhanced relations between Australia and the countries of Asia. Asialink delivers high-level forums, international collaborations, leadership training, education, community health and cultural programs in Australia and Asia. Asialink is a key provider of information, training and professional networks with offices in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, as well as a regional chapter in Singapore.

For further information visit: www.asialink.unimelb.edu.au

LEE KUAN YEW SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

The Lee Kuan Yew School (LKY School) is an autonomous, professional graduate school of the National University of Singapore. Our mission is to educate and train policy-makers and leaders, with the objective of raising the standards of governance throughout the region, improving the lives of its people and, in so doing, contributing to the transformation of Asia and beyond. In addition to masters and PhD programmes, LKY School offers high quality customised Executive Education Programs for time-constrained senior managers and professionals, with the aim of delivering creative solutions to real management and leadership challenges. Since 2004, LKY School has trained over 15,000 leaders from more than 90 countries. **For further information visit: www.lkyspp.nus.edu.sg**

CENTRE FOR ASEAN REGIONALISM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA

The Centre for ASEAN Regionalism at the University of Malaya (CARUM) was established in January 2015 to coincide with Malaysia's chairmanship of ASEAN. CARUM aims to be a national resource for Malaysia, assisting the country's regional leadership in policy formulation and implementation to meet the need for ASEAN effectiveness, including in wider regional leadership. More than just a research centre, CARUM acts as the central node in a web of University of Malaya institutions/programs/centres/initiatives. CARUM seeks to build strategic networks and partnerships and advance collaborations with researchers on the topic of ASEAN Regionalism within ASEAN and other regions. **For further information visit: www.carum.info**

WELCOME MESSAGE

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the 9th Asialink Conversations. Asialink is honoured to be partnering with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore and the Centre for ASEAN Regionalism at the University of Malaya in Malaysia. We are privileged to have Dr Aline Wong, Chancellor of UniSIM and an Adjunct Professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School as our Singapore Co-Chair.

We are delighted that Noeleen Heyzer has agreed to deliver an address on the opening night. As a former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Noeleen is a powerful role model for regional women's leadership, and we look forward to using her insights as a basis for our discussions.

The Asialink Conversations are designed to make an informed contribution to Australia-Asia cooperation and future planning. Launched in 2002, the Conversations have given priority to building relationships and mutual understanding with the ASEAN region – the Asian region which is geographically closest to Australia. The term 'conversations' is deliberately chosen. Our primary interest is to foster genuine exchange and debate in a focused yet conversational atmosphere.

We are pleased to be bringing senior participants from ASEAN countries and Australia to Singapore to discuss the important issue of women in leadership. With participants from a range of sectors - government, politics, business, academia, media, policy and civil society – our discussions will focus on the differing experiences of women in leadership in public life in ASEAN countries and Australia. We expect participants will wish to compare different cultural and community perspectives on women's leadership, and that particular attention will be given to the obstacles to women's advancement, as well as policy solutions and campaign ideas.

Following the Conversations, the host organisations will produce a collaborative report on women's leadership in ASEAN countries and Australia. Your unique insights during this Asialink Conversations will provide a valuable foundation for this report.

We hope you will find the experience rewarding.



Mr Sid Myer AM
Chair, Asialink
Australia



Professor Azirah Hashim
Director, CARUM
Malaysia



Professor Kishore Mahbubani
Dean, LKY School
Singapore

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Wednesday 9 December, Singapore

18.30	Bus transfer to the China Club	Shangri-La Hotel, Lobby
19.00-21.30	Asialink Chairman's Dinner and Conversations Opening Dinner Guest speaker: Noeleen Heyzer, former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations	China Club
21.30	Bus transfer to the Shangri-La Hotel	China Club

Thursday 10 December, Shangri-La Hotel

7.00-8.00	Breakfast	The Line, Lower Lobby, Tower Wing
8.00-8.30	Registration, tea and coffee	Foyer, Casuarina Room
8.30-9.00	Opening and welcome	Casuarina Room
9.00-10.30	Session 1 The experiences of women in leadership in ASEAN countries and Australia	Casuarina Room
10.30-10.50	Tea break	Foyer

Thursday 10 December, Shangri-La Hotel

10.50-12.20	Session 2 Obstacles to advancement	Casuarina Room
12.20-13.20	Lunch Nattha Komolvadhin in conversation with Dr Aline Wong	Acacia I
13.20-14.50	Session 3 What works? Sharing innovations	Casuarina Room
14.50-15.10	Tea break	Foyer
15.10-16.40	Session 4 Campaigning for change	Casuarina Room
16.40-17.10	Wrap up and priority setting	Casuarina Room
17.15	Bus transfer to Australian High Commissioner's Residence	Lobby
17.30-19.30	Closing cocktail reception	Australian High Commissioner's Residence
19.30	Bus transfer to Shangri-La Hotel	Australian High Commissioner's Residence

SESSION 1

The experiences of women in leadership in ASEAN countries and Australia

What is leadership?

Understandings of leadership can differ between societies, cultures and industries. Leadership, as it is commonly construed, is an ability to influence people, usually towards a change. Many conceptions of leadership derive from the military, with good leadership measured by one's ability to 'rally the troops' and 'take no prisoners', be tough, heroic or great.

The focus of this Asialink Conversations is on formal or organisational leadership. It should be noted, however, that many ordinary women in the region are leading informally and therefore less visible outside the traditional areas of leadership in government and business.

Questions to consider:

1. What progress has been made for women in leadership positions in ASEAN countries and Australia?
2. Is the progress different between countries and between sectors?
3. Has the language around women in leadership changed in the last ten years from equality to economic imperative? Does this matter or help?
4. Are women in Southeast Asia redefining what it means to lead?

Across a range of areas, Southeast Asia now outperforms many other regions of the world in gender empowerment. From higher education rates and improved health standards to rising income and expanding access to technology and finance, the benefits of economic development are flowing to greater numbers of women.

Yet the career prospects for women who aspire to leadership do not always match this story. From rural areas to corporate boardrooms, the reality for women across the region is often one of exclusion from positions of influence and leadership. The trickle of women who are ascending into government and business roles is still not happening fast enough to address the region's growing needs.

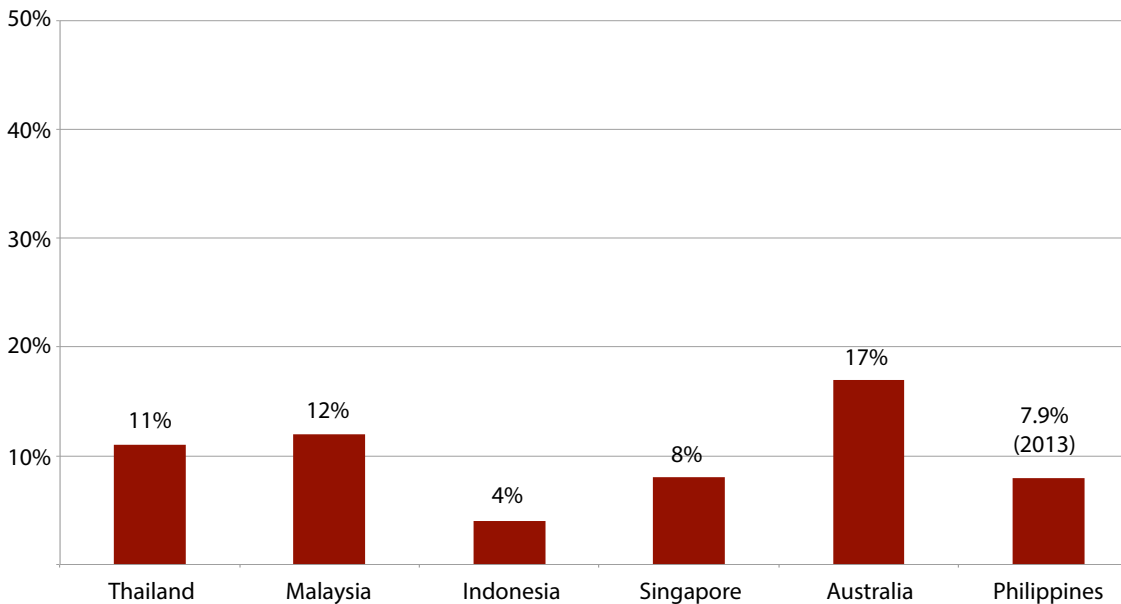
Demand for women's leadership is connected to deep, underlying changes across the region. Surveys point to a looming skills shortage, and widespread concern that management practices are in need of reform. As a result, both public and private sectors acknowledge the value of diversity in decision-making. Increasingly the cost of lost productivity through the neglect of female talent is being recognised and quantified, and women's success highlighted as critical for the region to fulfil its economic potential. Even the G20 in November 2016 cautioned that workplace inequality would undermine future growth prospects.

The global movement for institutional diversity has begun to resonate among parts of the region's corporate sector, with uptake following a series of Asia-focused studies over the last few years, such as McKinsey's *Women Matter* report and LKY School's publication *Rising to the Top*. Initiatives from abroad aimed at placing more women in boardrooms and senior management teams are now being practiced in the region, like Singapore's 'SG50 champions of change' campaign.

A compelling argument is that more female voices are useful for an organisation tackling complex problems. Given women usually bring a different perspective into a traditionally male area, women in leadership roles can help resist 'groupthink' and explore different points of view with more conviction. Across many different industry studies, companies with more women in senior leadership and boardroom roles have been shown to outperform those that are exclusively male. Increasingly, the data suggests the market rewards companies with more women than not.

To kick-start this process, listed companies have been prodded by some regional governments to appoint more women, as well as publishing data on gender recruitment. Even so, the outcomes have diverged among advanced economies, defying any simple explanation. In recent years Singapore's business ownership and senior management figures have improved for women, while corporate board diversity has only marginally improved. By contrast, in Australia the figures for women in senior leadership teams have barely moved over the last 10 years, while progress in board diversity outstrips the rest of the region.

Female representation on corporate boards

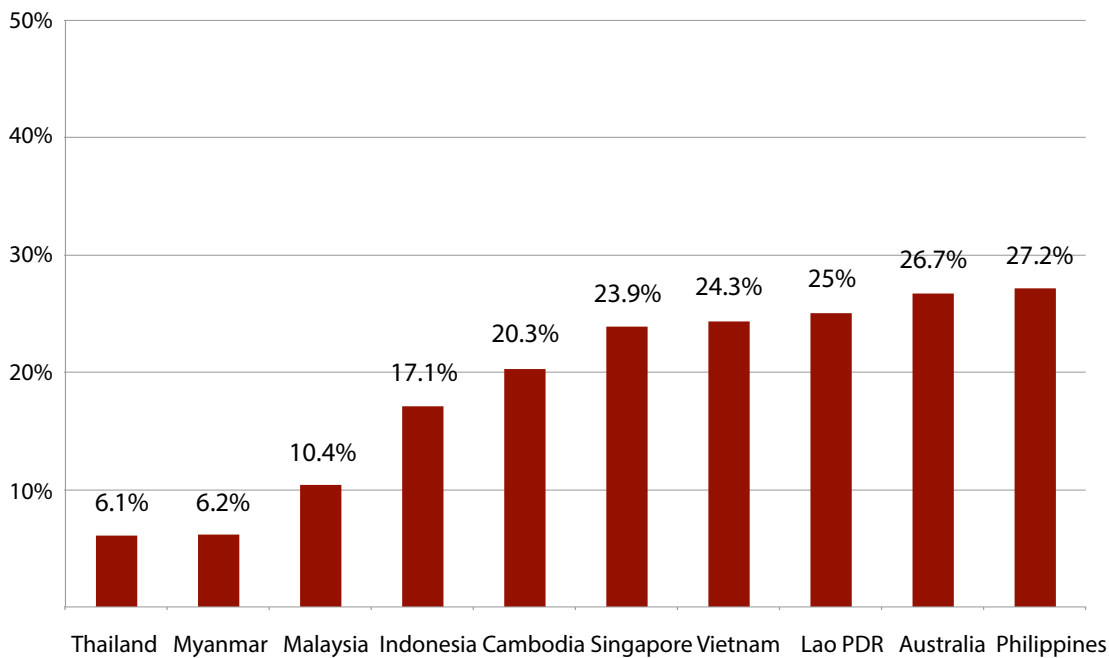


Source: *Women on Boards Survey/GMI Ratings 2014* (Latest country data available from MSCI)
Data unavailable for Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Brunei Darussalam and Myanmar.

While rising levels of education and skills among women in all countries make the economic case for women in leadership compelling, political representation across Southeast Asia is still heavily skewed towards men and unlikely to change without more attention. While there is no single formula to measure female involvement, every country has some kind of shortcoming in important areas of leadership – and none perform well across all the indicators.

Some countries are outliers for women in politics, like the success for women in the Philippines or recent backsliding in Thailand, but the record is one of slow and fragile gains in every other country, including Australia. In countries with competitive electoral systems, female voters are being acknowledged as an emerging force. Women have begun voting at higher rates than their male counterparts in Indonesia and Singapore, and in the case of the elections for Indonesia’s President Widodo and Malaysia’s Prime Minister Najib, female voters were arguably decisive in delivering victory.

Female representation in national legislatures



Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union database
 Data unavailable for Brunei Darussalam

There is no clear explanation for why some women ascend higher into elected office and others don’t, although kinship and dynastic ties loom large. Instead, there is a contradictory mix of outcomes with no firm connection to other indicators of development. For instance, the Philippines outperforms Australia in female representation at different levels of government, despite economic development favouring Australian women. Vietnam, Singapore, Lao PDR and Cambodia all enjoy more than 20% share of women in national legislatures, compared with Malaysia and Thailand, although this does not translate into ministerial posts. Even where Malaysia and post-coup Thailand have made little gains in representation, the former’s record has remained largely static while the condition of female Thai leaders is more volatile, shifting from year to year.

A more promising area for many countries is political representation at the sub-national level. Local politics generally has higher female representation across the region, with the Philippines and Vietnam recording notable progress at the district and provincial level. Research by the UN Development Program demonstrates a correlation between females ascending to these roles and rising work participation and literacy levels, suggesting that progress can be expected in greater urban, municipal, and district positions as development continues.

The value from more women leaders can already be seen in the way they are exercising power in these roles. Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines have seen shifting priorities as women develop a more influential voice, with education, poverty reduction, and transparency issues benefiting from more attention by local government bodies. Involvement in local government also helps develop habits of leadership, potentially creating a pipeline of women for higher office.

Facing ingrained bias, many females around the world have taken up the challenge to 'lean in' to lobby for promotion and proactively develop mentoring networks. The challenge for women in Southeast Asian countries is whether this strategy is useful or relevant when taking into account local social and cultural contexts which may not favour such behaviour. Personality surveys like Facet5 suggest the workers in Southeast Asia are more inclined to be consensus-driven and shy away from assertive independence.

Although these attitudes change over time, the academic literature is sceptical of transformational leadership outside the Western cultural context, emphasising management behaviour in Asia which promotes harmony in the workplace. For all the changes over the last ten years, the region's business leaders are still resistant to the overt pursuit of gender diversity.



Image: Aung San Suu Kyi, Leader of the National League for Democracy, Myanmar
Source: Claude Truong-Ngoc, via Wikimedia Commons

SESSION 2

Obstacles to advancement

Questions to consider:

1. What are the challenges to women's leadership in public life in ASEAN countries and Australia – social, cultural, religious, systemic and structural?
2. How are the obstacles to advancement different across the region and cultures?

Multiple obstacles to women's leadership are evident throughout Southeast Asian countries and Australia. The head of UN Women, Lakshmi Puri puts it simply when she describes the 'stubborn tradition, culture and religious influences' in Asia which 'jostle with, if not fight against this progressive and modern outlook'. On Australia, a senior male corporate leader explains the situation thus: 'Australia has deeply entrenched and outmoded social attitudes and norms around gender roles at home and work. The concept of "mateship" is too often abused as a proxy for [or to legitimise] the exclusion of women by men.'

From Islam in Malaysia and Indonesia, to Buddhism in Thailand and Myanmar, the Confucian heritage in Singapore and Vietnam, or Christianity in Australia, major religious traditions have depicted women as the maternal anchor of family life. They are also often the guardians of national culture. The historical legacy of discrimination continues to surface across every country. For example, the 2015 Household, Income and Labour Dynamics survey in Australia suggested most men were happier with their wives at home, instead of employed in a workplace.

Across the region, social patterns have become entrenched and reinforce sources of gender discrimination. For instance, the domestic economy in many rural areas is dependent on unpaid female labour to support male employment. This narrows the pool of future leaders as young women are often denied skills training for fear that an investment in them will accrue to another family after marriage. The prevalence of early marriage and high adolescent fertility rates in Lao PDR, the Philippines, Cambodia and Indonesia also acts to reinforce household demands on women.

As identified in the World Bank's *Women, Business and the Law 2016* report, in most countries there are at least some legal barriers to women's leadership. These can limit women's full economic participation and restrict their ability to engage in entrepreneurial and employment activities. For example, in Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia certain tax provisions directly favour men, and widows do not have equal inheritance rights.

For aspiring female politicians, the usual route to promotion through electoral politics is still dominated by traditional practices which are fundamentally resistant to change. Party gate-keepers often allocate campaign funds and influence nominations, and young women find it difficult to access the male-dominated networks through which this patronage system operates. To work outside this system, aspiring leaders can struggle to juggle household responsibilities and raise the money to campaign.

Female politicians who successfully navigate party bureaucracies still encounter resistance from a sceptical voting public, which can sometimes involve threats of violence and harassment. As with the media treatment of Prime Minister Julia Gillard in Australia, or Dyana Sofya in a recent Malaysian by-election, the campaign of female politicians can become side-tracked with the media focusing on trivial issues like appearance and marital status. Those who do succeed, like Corazon Aquino or Aung San Suu Kyi, are exceptional and held up as icons.

Maternity and paternity leave entitlements

Country	Maternity leave entitlement	Paternity leave entitlement
Malaysia	60 (100% salary)	0
Philippines	60 (100% salary)	7 (100% salary)
Cambodia	90 (50% salary)	0
Thailand	90 (100% salary)	0
Indonesia	90 (100% salary)	2 (100% salary)
Brunei Darussalam	91 (100% salary)	0
Myanmar	98 (70% salary)	15 (70% salary)
Lao PDR	105 (100% salary)	3 (100% salary)
Singapore	105 (100% salary)	7 (100% salary)
Australia	126 (partial salary, shared parental leave)	
Vietnam	180 (100% salary)	0

Source: *The World Bank's Women, Business and the Law 2016 report*

In the corporate sector, thinking has shifted away from the idea of a glass ceiling blocking access for women. Instead, the focus is increasingly on the many small-scale challenges for women which can derail the upward trajectory of promising careers. Whether it is due to a lack of options for maternity leave and child care, or office demands which sit uneasily alongside household responsibilities, workplace pressures disproportionately affect females. This is particularly challenging in some parts of Southeast Asia and Australia, with statistics pointing to persistent gender pay gaps and limited child care options.

Top-down decisions may deliver some cosmetic changes, but they do not guarantee lasting improvement unless there is a supportive infrastructure to nurture an organisational pipeline of young talent. While there has been more targeted recruitment of women in the corporate sector in recent years, in both Southeast Asia and Australia many early and mid-career women fail to successfully transition into senior management as part of a 'leaking pipeline' in talent promotion. In one recent survey, executive teams in Fortune 100 companies in Asia had an average of less than 5% female members.

Policy and implementation vary across the region, but even the most accommodating organisations struggle to overcome the influence of gender stereotyping. Interviews with female thinkers and leaders across the region by the LKY School in a 2014 report pointed to a common challenge of 'unconscious bias' operating against women, shaping their treatment in a professional context. Businesswomen are often dismissed as risk averse, and younger entrepreneurs struggle to raise funds for new ventures because there is little custom of women holding financial assets. These biases cross gender lines too, with many surveys showing large numbers of women believe their male colleagues are more suited to leadership than their female counterparts. For all the variations across the region, therefore, a common history of subordinate roles for women will be difficult to reverse in any country.

SESSION 3

What works? Sharing innovations

Questions to consider:

1. What are the different public and private sector policy responses used to elevate women into leadership positions around the region?
2. What impact have these policies had on women's leadership, if any?
3. Have they addressed 'unconscious bias' and the 'leaking pipeline'?
4. What is the role of men in helping/hindering women's leadership potential?

For all the challenges facing women, a range of initiatives have been taken to unlock their leadership potential. This is a long-term investment, and while it is difficult to assess the results of many different policy innovations, several high-profile cases stand out across the region.

Affirmative action is not generally a popular policy in Southeast Asia, but legislated quotas for women have been recommended by many studies to fast-track female voices in the community. The Philippines has narrowed the gender gap in politics through a system of proportional representation, which offers more space for smaller parties outside the traditional ruling parties (which favour men).

By contrast, other countries have experimented with equal opportunity measures at the party level. In Australia, one of the two major political parties has instituted a quota system, while Indonesia has applied 30% quotas for women to the electoral list of parties and a 'zipper system' where political parties alternate between men and women candidates throughout the party lists. As in local council elections in Cambodia, however, this is no guarantee that female candidates will receive votes, and women with dynastic ties still end up benefiting more than those with none.

An alternative in the private sector is to impose mandatory reporting requirements or voluntary targets in an attempt to encourage changed behaviour. In Australia and Malaysia for instance, companies listed on the stock exchange are now asked to publish information on gender recruitment.

As part of the UK-led '30 percent club' initiative, Malaysia has instituted a 30% target for women on corporate boards to match a similar goal for the country's public service. Some male corporate leaders in Australia have taken up the idea of 'panel pledges', agreeing to participate on panels only when there is at least one female speaker.

Government reform has also helped loosen the household constraints on women through greater public expenditure on health, changes to divorce/inheritance laws, and gender-equal retirement/pension schemes. This can extend to support for training initiatives, as in Malaysia where more than 700 women across the private sector have participated in an annual Women Directors Program since 2012, receiving coaching in exercises designed to prepare them for leadership challenges. The issue remains whether these women, now trained and ready but perhaps without the necessary networks, can actually attain a board position.

Across the region, there are also examples of companies attempting to stem the leaking pipeline of women. To address the micro-challenges for career advancement, some businesses have begun to follow global best practice by expanding maternity leave and child care options, developing performance targets and data to track female retention and promotion, and increasing rotation to diversify learning and experience. One innovative campaign undertaken in Australia has been to create accelerated 'on-ramps' to maintain connections with female employees while on maternity leave. Even as smaller enterprises struggle to finance these changes, the greater use of technology in the digital workforce should see possibilities for remote work to expand.

Many regional companies have achieved progress through greater workplace flexibility. This is arguably one reason behind the high rate of female executives in Thailand, where family-operated businesses allow for more accommodating work practices among relatives. A better way could involve experimentation with part-time directors, or to re-think corporate positions. Malaysia has relaxed the rules for executives in government-connected companies to sit on multiple boards, with the aim of prominent businesswomen who were first supported by government migrating into privately owned corporations too.

'Employer of choice' awards are being used around the region to reward businesses for their ability to maximise the full potential of their workforce, both male and female. In tight labour markets where employers are vying for the best talent, these awards seek to give businesses a competitive edge and positive profile, encouraging more flexible and gender-equal workplaces.

There is also a need to tackle social attitudes about professional women. Pioneering business leaders have made their commitment to female leadership as visible as possible, instituting programs for the mentoring of female recruits and offering training programs in gender bias and the value of diversity. The aim behind these initiatives is to reverse the legacy of social attitudes among women who doubt their capacity to ascend into leadership, and act as role models for male subordinates to follow. This is also seen in the sponsorship forums for young female thought-leaders, or in the profile of successful women as role models for future leaders at award ceremonies.

In all of these initiatives, male allies have proven crucial in overcoming stereotypes. In response to data which suggests that male leaders remain more effective networkers, cross-gender connections are being developed for aspiring women to better promote themselves. Training exercises in unconscious bias can help educate men about the challenges facing women, and in Australia 'Male Champions of Change' have emerged among visible industry and public sector leaders to lobby for female promotion and share workplace practices to encourage gender diversity.

The conversation is increasingly shifting from the need to mentor young females to involving senior males as dedicated 'sponsors'. Rather than train women in more skills, the aim is to encourage leaders to seek out and champion those already deserving of promotion. Policy initiatives can only go so far with limited buy in from powerful stakeholders, and many regional surveys reflect a lack of interest among many business leaders in the value of women's leadership. A 2012 McKinsey report found that up to 70 percent of Asian companies do not have gender diversity on their strategic agenda. In the face of this, it could be argued that more dramatic interventions are needed.

SESSION 4

Campaigning for change

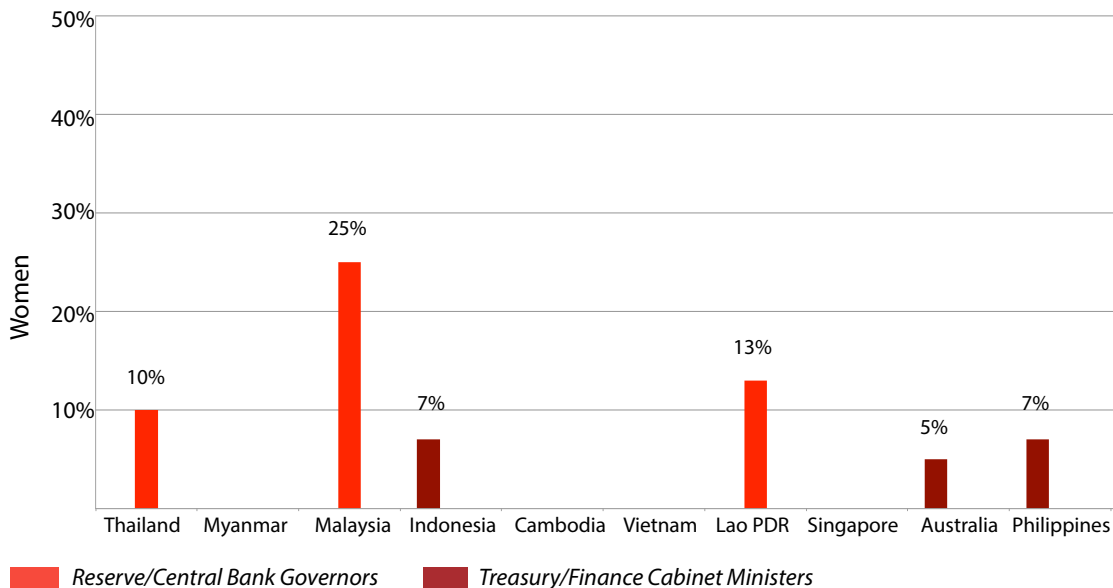
Questions to consider:

1. How can change best be affected? What initiatives should we focus on, eg social media, mentoring/sponsorship?
2. How can women's leadership be given greater prominence?
3. Should different strategies be crafted for different countries?
4. How can transnational networks influence public opinion in countries as diverse as Malaysia and Australia, or Singapore and Indonesia? If some countries are stronger advocates in the network than others, will this run the risk of losing allies and partners?

A growing number of voices across the region are campaigning for more women in leadership, and the scope for change is greater as advocacy groups increasingly build links across borders. With a variety of challenges facing aspiring female leaders, from religious influences to child care demands, there is a need to set priorities for further action.

By ascending to positions in government and business, the positive image of women in leadership can now be magnified by social media. At present, the gains among women from Southeast Asia and Australia do not always push back against gender stereotypes surrounding leadership. With some notable exceptions, especially among mayors and councillors in Indonesia, female politicians are often appointed to 'soft portfolios' like family affairs and children, rather than 'nation building' portfolios like finance and defence.

Female representation in economic governance, 1985-2015



Sources: Country ministerial records, *The Almanac of Women and Minorities in World Politics*, and *The International Yearbook and Statemen's Who's Who*. Data unavailable for Brunei Darussalam

By contrast, the corporate sector is arguably more receptive to re-thinking the power of visible female leaders. Given the value of online branding, image conscious businesses are more inclined to respond to pressure on social media, and businesses want to avoid gender blind spots as they pursue female-dominated consumer markets. Women's purchasing and reputational power is increasingly being used by campaigners to drive women's leadership.

Technology offers a space for discussion and lobbying which never existed before, and public advocacy has already taken off across the region. The innovative use of 'hashtag activism' can propel women's voices to the forefront of public discussion, although its reach is limited by the usage levels of Twitter, which vary substantially between markets.

Beyond digital technology, the media have a large role to play in coordinating the reach of emerging female leaders. The International Women's Entrepreneurship Day shows that coordinated outreach to media partners can generate a platform to promote new female leaders, drawing public attention to innovative work by women and ideas worth supporting. Regional surveys constantly stress the potential role of women in media, and these are powerful allies for the NGO sector when fused with new technology.

If this activism targets business thinking, there is a powerful capacity for marketing and public relations which can reach a broader audience. This can be seen in the example of Procter & Gamble's #SharetheLoad campaign, which has tried to re-define the responsibility for doing the laundry to include men as well as women, challenging gender stereotypes. Social media campaigns can also target the customer base of larger companies with the hope that it will flow back into business practice.

Another possibility is to rely on sympathetic corporate leaders in Southeast Asia to produce a ripple effect via their business networks. Already, efforts have been made by NGOs to encourage leading companies to partner with women-led businesses, or ensure that gender-sensitive policy changes are reciprocated by suppliers and distributors. This can already be seen in the example of the retail goods outlet ECHOstore in the Philippines, which was set up in 2008 to offer market access for small producers and sources 85% of its supplies from local Filipino women.

One challenge is that social attitudes are difficult to reverse without the risk of public backlash. Naming and shaming campaigns are increasingly popular tactics around the world to push back against gender bias in media and advertising. For all of its power to capture attention and mobilise opinion, one recent OECD study found that social media campaigns struggle to produce the lasting commitment among supporters to overcome hardened attitudes.

For several years, corporate advisory and NGO reports have called for mentoring as a device to strengthen the confidence among aspiring professional women, with the assumption that more assertive leadership is needed by women to overcome forums which are historically favourable to men.

Studies have revealed that higher levels of female participation in public life are associated with lower levels of corruption. With governments championing anti-corruption in places like Indonesia, there is potential to elevate women to drive these efforts.

Despite the growing connections across civil society, women in Southeast Asia and Australia face a diverse range of challenges and opportunities. This is especially significant, as women's activism is already being pulled in several directions across a patchwork of national and local sensitivities. The value of social networking is in bringing together a critical mass that can't be ignored, but we should query the effect if cultural perspectives are too dissimilar.

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CO-CHAIRS



SID MYER AM
Chair, Asialink, Australia

Sid Myer is the Chief Executive Officer of Yulgilbar Group of Companies with responsibility for the development and management of local and international investment portfolios, agricultural interests in Australia, and the property and business interests within the Group.

With over 30 years' experience in retailing and investment management industries in Australia and overseas, Mr Myer has built diverse global networks, especially in Asia, across business, government, academia and the arts. He is a Director of The Myer Family Investments Pty Ltd, The Myer Family Company Ltd, Copia Investment Partners, and Australian Geographic Retail Pty Ltd.

Mr Myer is an active contributor and a supporter of many philanthropic projects. He is the Chairman of The Estate of Sidney Myer and a Trustee of The Sidney Myer Fund, which funds initiatives across a wide range of social and community projects in Australia and Asia. Building Australia's engagement in Asia is important to Mr Myer. In December 2005, Mr Myer was appointed as Chairman of Asialink.

More recently, he joined the Board of the National Portrait Gallery in July 2013, after accepting an invitation from the Minister for the Arts. Mr Myer graduated in Economics and Marketing from Monash University in Melbourne.



JENNY MCGREGOR
CEO, Asialink, Australia

Jenny McGregor is the founding CEO of Asialink at The University of Melbourne and founding Executive Director of the Asia Education Foundation. Under her leadership Asialink has become Australia's largest non-government centre for the promotion of Australia-Asia relations, with an annual budget of over A\$10 million and activities spanning education, the arts, leadership, health, and corporate and public programs. Ms McGregor makes regular media appearances on issues relating to Australia's engagement with the Asian region.

Ms McGregor has been a member of the Boards of the APEC Women's Business Advisory Committee and the Myer Foundation's Beyond Australia Committee. She is currently on the Advisory Board of the Dunlop Asia Awards, a member of the Executive of the Melbourne Confucius Institute and a member of the Board of Australian Volunteers International.

Prior to taking up her Asialink appointment in 1990, Ms McGregor worked as a political adviser and senior manager in Australia's Federal and State governments. She then joined the Commission for the Future to research Australia-Asia relations. She holds the Peter Brice award for outstanding contribution to teaching and learning about the Asia-Pacific region and is a recipient of the World Chinese Economic Forum Lifetime Achievement Award for Leadership in Asian Studies in Australia. She was awarded a Universitas 21 (U21) Award for Internationalisation in 2013 in recognition of her contribution to the development of Asialink and its role as a national leader on issues of Asian engagement in Australia. Ms McGregor is also a Fellow of the Australian Institute for International Affairs for 2014. Ms McGregor has a BA (Hons) and Dip Ed from The University of Melbourne.



PROFESSOR AZIRAH BINTI HASHIM

Director, Centre for ASEAN Regionalism at the University of Malaya, Malaysia

Professor Azirah Hashim is the Director of the Centre for ASEAN Regionalism at the University of Malaya (CARUM), Executive Director at the Asia-Europe Institute (AEI) and a Professor in the English Language Department, Faculty of Languages and Linguistics. Prior to that, she was Dean of the Humanities Research Cluster and Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Linguistics. Her research interests include Language Contact in the Region, English as a Lingua Franca in ASEAN, Language and Law, and Academic and Professional Discourse and she has published extensively in these areas.

Professor Hashim sits on the executive committee of the Asia Pacific Languages for Specific Purposes and Professional Communication Association, and is also a former executive committee member of the International Association of Forensic Linguists. She is currently President of the Malaysian Association of Applied Linguistics, an affiliate of the International Association of Applied Linguistics. She is on the MyExpert committee at the Ministry of Education and on several other committees within the University and outside.

In 2009, Professor Hashim was awarded the Georg Forster Research Fellowship for Experienced Researchers, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Germany and is a Fellow of the Foundation. Projects she has been involved in include the Ministry of Education's CLMV project focusing on higher education in Cambodia and Lao PDR, a Swedish Link project on Public Understanding of Expert Views on Health Risks and projects on Language Contact and Professional Discourse.



DR ALINE WONG

Chancellor, UniSIM, Singapore

Dr Aline Wong is the Chancellor of UniSIM. She has had a long working relationship with UniSIM, having been its Academic Advisor since the establishment of the University in 2005. She has been closely involved with the introduction, oversight and support for a number of degree programs. She also served as a member of UniSIM's Board of Trustees from 2005 to 2011.

Dr Wong was a Member of Parliament for four consecutive terms from 1984 to 2001 and held appointments as Minister of State for Health and Education. She became Senior Minister of State in 1995 and held that position until she retired from politics at the end of 2001. She was Chairman of the Housing and Development Board from 2003 to 2007, and served on many other boards and committees in past years. She is currently an Adjunct Professor at the LKY School, a member of the Public Guardian Board and a Board member of WINGS. She also serves as a member on the Advisory Board, Centre for Liveable Cities under the Ministry of National Development.

Dr Wong was awarded the International Women's Forum 'Women Who Make a Difference' award in 2006, and was inducted into the 'Singapore Women's Hall of Fame' in 2014. Between 2010 and 2014, she held the appointment as Singapore's Representative for Women's Rights to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children.

Dr Wong obtained her PhD in Sociology from the University of California at Berkeley and was a Professor of Sociology at the National University of Singapore before she joined UniSIM.

CONVENORS



GEORGINA DOWNER

Director, Asialink Diplomacy, Australia

Georgina is the Director of Asialink Diplomacy, a centre for Track II dialogue and applied research on Australia's engagement with Asia.

Prior to joining Asialink she served as a diplomat at the Australian Embassy in Tokyo, Japan from 2010 until 2014. At the Embassy, Georgina oversaw the Embassy's relations with the Japanese parliament and managed Australia's engagement with Japan in the field of arms control and non-proliferation.

Georgina has also worked as a competition lawyer at a leading Australian law firm, and as an advisor to a US Senator and a Peer in the British House of Lords. She sits on the board of the indigenous arts project and is a member of the Australia-Japan Society of Victoria.

Georgina has a Masters in Public International Law from the London School of Economics and degrees in Law and Commerce from the University of Melbourne. She is fluent in both Japanese and French.



DR ASTRID TUMINEZ

Regional Director, Legal and Corporate Affairs (Southeast Asia), Microsoft

Astrid is the Regional Director of Legal and Corporate Affairs (Southeast Asia) at Microsoft and an Adjunct Professor at the LKY School. She has nearly two decades of experience in public policy analysis, philanthropy, research, project management, and private equity.

Prior to joining LKY School, Astrid was Senior Research Associate of the Philippine Facilitation Project at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), where she assisted in advancing peace negotiations between the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. She was also a Senior Fellow of the Southeast Asian Research Centre at the City University of Hong Kong.

Most recently, Astrid authored *Rising to the Top? A Report on Women's Leadership in Asia*, a project supported by the Asia Society and The Rockefeller Foundation. She sits on the board of ASKI Global, an NGO that trains and finances entrepreneurship for migrant workers, and is on the International Advisory Board of the Asian Women's Leadership University project.

Astrid was selected in 2013 as a 'Top 100 Global Influencer' by the Filipina Women's Network of the US; and has been a USIP Scholar, a Freeman Fellow of the Salzburg Global Seminar, a Harvard Kennedy School Fellow, a Distinguished Alumna of Brigham Young University, and a fellowship recipient of the Social Science Research Council and the MacArthur Foundation.

She holds a Masters degree in Soviet Studies from Harvard University and a PhD in political science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

DELEGATES

AUSTRALIA



CYNTHIA BALOGH

National Program Manager, Women in Global Business

Cynthia is the inaugural National Program Manager for the Women in Global Business (WIGB) program - a joint initiative of the Australian, State and Territory governments supported by Austrade. Cynthia was recruited to develop the WIGB program from inception, on the basis of her unique blend of entrepreneurial international business experience and Australian Government expertise. The WIGB program has now achieved international acclaim for being the premier best-practice model in assisting women-led businesses to access global markets.

Prior to this role Cynthia was the founder, owner and CEO of human resources management consulting firms in Australia, the UK and Hungary. Prior to her international entrepreneurial career, Cynthia was a diplomat posted as First Secretary to the Australian Embassies in Syria and France. She is a regular presenter and speaker at conferences and seminars. Cynthia is Chair of the Victorian Multicultural Business Ministerial Council and sits on various boards. Cynthia is a Fellow of the Australian Human Resources Institute.



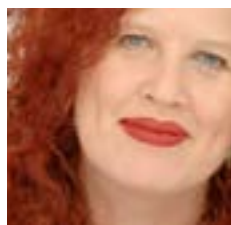
PENNY BURTT

Vice President, Government Affairs and Public Policy, Asia Pacific, Visa

Penny is Vice President Government Affairs, Asia with global payments company, Visa. She leads the company's engagement with governments across the region, and serves on the company's Asia Pacific executive management team.

Prior to joining Visa, Penny was Director of External Relations and Client Service Risk, Asia, with McKinsey & Company. Penny joined McKinsey from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. In her diplomatic career, Penny represented Australia at a senior level in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and at the United Nations in Geneva and New York. She also served as Assistant Secretary Southeast Asia and as an adviser to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Penny sits on the boards of the American Chamber of Commerce; the Singapore Institute for International Affairs; BoardAgender (women's board advocacy); and the Singapore Committee of the Australian Institute of Company Directors; the US National Centre for APEC; and the Advisory Council of Asialink Business.



LINDLEY EDWARDS

Group Managing Director, AFG Venture Group

Lindley is the Group Managing Director of AFG Venture Group. AFG Venture Group undertakes mergers, acquisitions, divestments, fund raising, licensing and strategic consulting. It has offices in Sydney, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and India.

Previously Lindley was a State Manager (Vice President) with Citibank, and spent nine years with Macquarie Bank as an Associate Director in the Corporate Banking Division. Lindley sits on the boards of Asialink, Grameen Foundation Australia, Population Health Research Network, and the National Bank of Vanuatu. She has been a state finalist in the Telstra Businesswomen's awards and in 2000 was admitted to the Australian Businesswomen's Hall of Fame.

She is a Senior Fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australia. Lindley holds undergraduate degrees in Accounting and in Banking and Finance. She also holds post graduate qualifications in corporate governance and in various financial services regulatory courses and is currently studying for a PhD in Philosophy.



PROFESSOR SUSAN ELLIOTT

Deputy Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor International, The University of Melbourne

Susan is the Deputy Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor International at the University of Melbourne. She is responsible for the strategic leadership of the University's international engagement, partnerships and programs; national and international student recruitment strategy; student global mobility; and the student experience. She is a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

Susan is Vice President of the Asia Pacific Association for International Education. She was formerly Chair of the Senior Staff Steering Committee of the Asia Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) and is currently a member of the APRU International Policy Advisory Committee. She also serves as a Board member for the Australia India Institute and on the Council of International House, Melbourne.



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SUSAN HARRIS-RIMMER

Australian Research Council Future Fellow, Griffith University

Susan is an Australian Research Council Future Fellow in Griffith Law School, and an Adjunct Reader in the Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy at the Australian National University. Susan often acts as a policy adviser to government and produces policy papers on the UNSC, G20, IORA and MIKTA. She was selected as an expert for the official Australian delegation to the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York in 2014, and was an Australian representative to the W20 in Turkey.

She has been a board member of the Australian National Committee for UN Women and has previously been President of Australian Lawyers for Human Rights. In October 2013 Susan was appointed to the national board of the Refugee Council of Australia, and as an Ambassador for the Australian Refugee Trust. In 2014 Susan joined the board of the International Women's Development Agency.



ALIZA KNOX

Vice President, Online Sales, APAC and LATAM, Twitter

Aliza is the Vice President of Online Sales, APAC and LATAM at Twitter. She is responsible for helping grow Twitter's advertising business, as well as new channel growth, for example, around Twitter's self-service advertising platform for small and medium size businesses in APAC. Prior to Twitter, she held leadership positions at Google where, amongst responsibilities for Commerce, Online Sales and Operations across Asia-Pacific, she was responsible for Google's Women in Leadership programs for the region. She also has over two decades of financial services and international experience.

Aliza holds a BA in Applied Math and Economics (magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa) from Brown University and an MBA degree with distinction from New York University. She is @alizaknox on Twitter.



HELEN KROGER

Senator Emeritus

Helen is a former Australian Senator, and past President of the Victorian branch of the Liberal Party. During her time in Parliament, Helen was a Chairman of the Australian Senate's Foreign Affairs, Defence & Trade Committee. She initiated many parliamentary inquiries during this time, including a review of Prospective Marriage Visas, as well as an inquiry into gender practices in the Australian Defence Department. She served as Chief Senate Whip in Opposition and then in Government, and was the first female Victorian Liberal to occupy these positions.

She was recently preselected to represent the Liberal Party in the electorate of Bruce for the 2016 Australian federal election. If elected, Helen will be the first woman to represent the electorate.



KAREN LOON
Client Relationship Partner, PwC Singapore

Karen is a client relationship partner in the Assurance practice at PwC with clients in the banking industry. In July 2013, Karen was appointed as PwC Singapore's Banking and Capital Markets Leader, and Territory Diversity Leader. She is also PwC's East Cluster Diversity Co-ordinator and the chair of the Global Financial Services Diversity Steering Committee. Karen is an Executive Committee member of the Singapore Committee for UN Women, a committee member of BoardAgender, an organisation in Singapore that aims to facilitate the benefits of gender balanced businesses, and has been an active committee member of Financial Women's Association (Singapore). Karen is a practising member of the Institute of Singapore Chartered Accountants, an associate member of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, and a fellow of the Financial Services Institute of Australasia. She has a Master of Business Administration from Macquarie University and a Bachelor of Economics from the University of Sydney.



SIMONE LOUREY
Company Director

Simone is a private investor, company director and patron of Asialink's Singapore Chapter. Winning one of Asialink's inaugural Arts Management residencies to Hong Kong in 1998, she produced a Melbourne series for the City Festival and has remained a resident of Asia ever since. She is now focused on socially responsible investing via the family company 3BL Investments Ltd as well as the arts and cultural sectors and has particular interests in advancing opportunities for women in the region. After an honours degree from the University of Melbourne, Simone specialised in public relations and corporate communications consulting to companies such as Shell Australia, the Melbourne Writers Festival, the Victorian Arts Centre and Playbox/Malthouse Theatres. She has also produced a number of independent performing arts productions. Simone is the first expatriate woman to serve on the board of eminent Singaporean performing arts companies Wild Rice Ltd and the Teng Ensemble.



SENATOR JENNY MCALLISTER
Senator for New South Wales

Jenny was sworn in as a Labor Senator for NSW in May 2015. Prior to joining the Senate, Jenny occupied a range of leadership roles in a global engineering firm, providing advice on infrastructure policy and strategy. She has held senior roles in the NSW public sector, developing climate change and environmental policy. She also served as an environment advisor in the NSW state government. Jenny is passionate about creating opportunities for community participation in politics. In 2003 Jenny founded the Labor Environment Activist Network, and served as one of its inaugural convenors until 2007. In 2002 she worked to connect Labor members to the Walk Against the War Coalition in NSW. Jenny's interests include economics, gender equality, indigenous culture and welfare, the environment and Australia's relationship with the Pacific. Jenny has two small children, and lives in Redfern with her husband, John.



TROY RODERICK
Head of Diversity & Inclusion, Telstra

Troy has specialised in Diversity & Inclusion for around 20 years. Joining Telstra in April 2007, Troy now leads Telstra's Diversity & Inclusion function with reach into customer, community and HR practice. He is a member of the Australian Human Rights Commission's Working Group on Cultural Diversity & Inclusive Leadership, and the Global Expert Community of Catalyst's Research Centre for Corporate Practice. Troy is also an active White Ribbon Ambassador as part of Australia's campaign to end men's violence against women. Prior to joining Telstra, Troy held senior roles in corporate and organisational development in legal and regulatory, transport, retail, environment, local government and human services organisations, working mainly in D&I, but also corporate planning, public sector ethics, learning and development, and corporate performance reporting. In October 2015, Troy was recognised in the 'Top 50 diversity professionals in industry' in the inaugural Global Diversity List, supported by 'The Economist'.



KEE WONG
Managing Director, e-Centric Innovations

Kee is Managing Director of e-Centric Innovations – an IT/Management consulting firm operating in Australia, Malaysia, and Singapore, serving large multinational enterprises and governments. Kee is currently the Chair of the Board of the Australian Information Industry Association, Deputy Chair of Asialink, is a Board Member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Foundation Board Member of the National Gallery of Victoria and Monash University's Faculty of Engineering & IT. Kee is also a Council Member of Victoria University and an Advisory Board Member of the Australia-Malaysia Institute (an appointment by Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs). Kee is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons), a Graduate Diploma in Computing and an MBA. Kee was made a Fellow of Monash University in 2010 and Distinguished Alumni in 2014.

CAMBODIA



SOPHEAP CHAK
Executive Director, Cambodian Center for Human Rights

Sopheap is Executive Director of the Cambodian Center for Human Rights, one of the leading human rights organisations working for the promotion and protection of political and civil rights in Cambodia. She is one of Cambodia's most prominent human rights advocates, and her work has been recognised by US President Barack Obama. Sopheap is also one of Cambodia's leading human rights bloggers on sopheapfocus.com, and is a contributing author to Future Challenges and Global Voices Online. She ran the Cambodian Youth Network for Change, which mobilised young activists around the country for greater civic engagement. Sopheap holds two Bachelor's Degrees in International Relations and Economics and a Master's Degree in International Peace Studies, which she completed at the International University of Japan.

INDONESIA



DIAN FATWA
Head, Business Development, Southeast Asia, ABC International

Dian is the Head of Business Development, Southeast Asia at ABC International. Prior to working at the ABC, Dian served in various media outlets in Indonesia as a television talk show host, radio talk-back host, documentary film maker and expert trainer for the media. During that period, she built a strong reputation and established networks with key Indonesian Government institutions, private sector, politicians, academics and activists that she maintains to this day. Dian holds a Masters in Corporate Environmental and Sustainable Management from Monash University, Australia. She has also completed various senior leadership programs, including the Asialink Leaders Program and the Leadership for Environment and Development program with the Rockefeller Foundation.



HANA SATRIYO

Director, Gender and Women's Participation, Asia Foundation

Hana is the Director for Gender and Women's Participation at the Asia Foundation Office in Jakarta. A development professional, her areas of expertise include gender budgeting and women's political participation, decentralisation and local governance and legislative development.

Hana joined the Foundation in 1998 as a program officer and managed the Foundation's women's political participation, religious freedom and legislative development programs. In her current position, Hana oversees program development and implementation of the gender and women's participation program. The program promotes participation of women stakeholders in decision-making processes, the role of civil society in improving the governance of elections, mainstreaming gender equality in budget and public policies, promoting women's role in the public sphere, and combating violence against women.

Hana has an MSc in International Politics of Asia from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, and a degree in International Relations, from Padjadjaran University in Bandung, Indonesia.



NANI ZULMINARNI

Founder and Chair, PEKKA

Nani is the founder and Chair of PEKKA, the Program for Women-Headed Households. PEKKA supports over 30,000 rural widows, abandoned and divorced women in Indonesia. PEKKA assists members and leaders with access to different resources for livelihoods, engaging in decision-making processes at different levels, as well as accessing social protection and justice.

Nani has more than 28 years' experience in women's empowerment. A gender and development specialist, popular educator, and activist, Nani's passion is for community organising and using different entry points at the grass roots level for the economic and political empowerment of women.

Nani is also actively involved in regional and global networks, including as a founder and advisory member of JASS (Just Associates) and the International Advisory Group of Musawah. Nani has received national and international recognition for her work, including the Saparinah Sadli Award in 2010, the Lotus Leadership Award in 2014, the Global Fairness Award in 2014, and the Kick Andy Hero in 2015.

MALAYSIA



PROFESSOR RAIHANAH BINTI ABDULLAH

Dean, Humanities Research Cluster, University of Malaya

Raihanah is the Dean of the Humanities Research Cluster, University of Malaya. She was the Head of the Department of Shariah and Law in 2006-2007 and the Director of the Centre for Civilizational Dialogue in 2011-2013.

Raihanah is a registered Shariah lawyer practicing at the Shariah court in Malaysia. In 2011 at the 38th Session of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Council of Foreign Ministers in Kazakhstan, Raihanah was elected as one of the first group of 18 commissioners in the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission, OIC representing Malaysia until 2017.

Raihanah has been appointed by several Government agencies as a consultant in the Family Support Division under the Department of Shariah Judiciary Malaysia and also as an expert panellist dealing with Muslim women issues, under the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia.

**PROFESSOR WAH-YUN LOW****Head, Research Management Center, Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya**

Wah-Yun is Professor of Psychology and Head of the Research Management Center at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya. She graduated with a BA (Hons) from the National University of Malaysia and obtained her MSc and PhD (Medical Psychology) from the University of Surrey, England. Wah-Yun is actively engaged in teaching, research, service and consultancy. She is one of the pioneers in human sexuality research in Malaysia. Her main research areas are behavioural medicine, sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV/AIDS, ageing and men's health. She has published 20 books and book chapters and about 200 articles in peer-reviewed journals. Wah-Yun currently heads the Africa-Asia Development University Network on Women in Science and Technology project. She is also the Editor-in-Chief of the Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health.

**MARINA MAHATHIR****Activist**

Marina is a writer, columnist, women's rights and HIV/AIDS activist. She served as the President of the Malaysian AIDS Council for 12 years from 1993-2005 and was a member of numerous international and regional committees on HIV/AIDS. Currently she is a member of the Board of Sisters in Islam, which advocates for justice and equality for Muslim women. Marina is also a member of the International Advisory Group of Musawah, the global movement for justice and equality in the Muslim family. In 2010, Marina was named the UN Person of the Year by the United Nations in Malaysia. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day in 2011, Marina was one of only two Malaysian women named to WomenDeliver.org's list of 100 Most Inspiring People Delivering for Girls and Women. Marina's latest venture is a website for women travellers in Asia and the Middle East, Zafigo.com.

**YEEN SEEN NG****COO, Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute**

Yeen Seen is the COO of the Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute and Senior Director at the Centre for Public Policy Studies. She is also Senior Program Director of the World Chinese Economic Forum, and was previously Head of Secretariat of the Malaysia-China Business Council. In 2011-2012, Yeen Seen was made a National Youth Icon by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Malaysia. She was also appointed to serve on the Technical Committee for the National Wage Council and was part of the International Visitors Program observing the Indonesia Legislative Election Campaign in April 2009.

Yeen Seen is an alumni of the Korea Foundation's Next Generation Leaders Course 2010, the International Visiting Leaders Programme to the United States in May 2011 and the JENESYS East Asia Future Leaders Program of Japan in 2012. An Accounting graduate of Cardiff University, she holds a postgraduate degree in Education Policy from Warwick University, UK.

**ELINA NOOR****Director, Foreign Policy and Security Studies, Institute of Strategic & International Studies Malaysia**

Elina is Director, Foreign Policy and Security Studies, at the Institute of Strategic & International Studies Malaysia. She was previously a key team member of the Brookings Institution's Project on US Relations with the Islamic World in its formative years post-September 11, 2001 and researched WMD terrorism at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies in Washington, DC.

Elina's policy interests include US-Malaysia bilateral relations, cyber warfare and security, radicalisation and terrorism, and major power relations. Her commentaries have appeared in local and foreign media, including The New Straits Times, BFM, the New York Times and Al-Jazeera. She has been honoured twice by Marie Claire Malaysia magazine as a Woman of Style and Substance, and by the Malaysian Women's Weekly as one of its 2011 Great Women of Our Time. Elina has an LLM in Public International Law from the London School of Economics and Political Science. Elina also holds an MA in Security Studies from Georgetown University.

PHILIPPINES



IRMA COSICO
CEO, ASKI Global

Irma is the CEO of ASKI Global. She has worked in different capacities in the microfinance industry for almost fifteen years. Before joining ASKI Global, she was Managing Director of ABS-CBN Bayan Academy for Social Entrepreneurship & Human Resource Development. Irma has served as a consultant to the Asian Development Bank on the design of the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction Project's Philippine Initiatives in Rural Development, and was commissioned by HSBC to do a study on Franchising Microfinance. Irma was one of the pioneers of the Alliance of Philippine Partners in Enterprise Development, a network of Christian-based MFIs.

Irma has a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and a Master of Science in Development Communication from the University of the Philippines. She has also completed Masters degrees in Public Administration at Carleton University and in Entrepreneurship at the Asian Institute of Management.



AMBASSADOR ROSARIO MANALO
Dean, Helena Z Benitez School of International Relations and Diplomacy,
Philippine Women's University

Ambassador Manalo is currently the Dean of the Helena Z Benitez School of International Relations and Diplomacy, the Director of the Center for Gender Equality and People Empowerment, and the Director of the International Students Office of Philippine Women's University (PWU).

Ambassador Manalo served as Philippine Ambassador to Belgium and Luxembourg, France, Spain, and Sweden. She was also an adviser to former President Fidel V Ramos for negotiations on the ASEAN Charter. She was the Philippine negotiator on the Terms of Reference of the ASEAN Human Rights Body and is currently serving as the Philippine Representative to the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights.

She has a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service, a Bachelor of Laws and Jurisprudence, and a Masters in Public Administration, from the University of the Philippines. She also has a Masters in International Relations and Diplomacy from Long Island University. She is currently undertaking a PhD in Social Development at PWU.



MARIA RESSA
CEO and Executive Editor, Rappler

Maria is the CEO and Executive Editor of Rappler, a social news network which uses a hearts and minds approach to news through a unique mood navigator. She is also the Southeast Asia Visiting Scholar at CORE Lab at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

Maria has been a journalist in Asia for more than 25 years, first as CNN bureau chief in Manila and Jakarta and later taking the helm of ABS-CBN News and Current Affairs. She was CNN's lead investigative reporter focusing on terrorism in Southeast Asia and wrote 'Seeds of Terror: An Eyewitness Account of al-Qaeda's Newest Center of Operations in Southeast Asia' (2003) as Author-in-Residence and Senior Fellow at the International Centre for Political Violence & Terrorism Research in Singapore. Maria has also taught for her alma mater, Princeton University and the University of the Philippines.

SINGAPORE



DATO' DR JANNIE CHAN

Founder and Executive Vice Chairman, The Hour Glass Limited

Dato' Dr Jannie Chan is the Founder and Executive Vice Chairman of The Hour Glass Limited, a leading luxury watch retailer. In 2003 she was conferred the Darjah Sultan Ahmad Shah Pahang (DSAP) which carries the title Dato'. Dato' Dr Chan is the founder of Save Our Planet Investments, an eco-enterprise with interests in biotechnology and scientific research incorporating traditional Chinese medicine. She is a member of the Women's Leadership Initiative Board, John F Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. President of the Commonwealth Business Women's Network, she was also the first and only female executive board member on the Commonwealth Business Council, and the first female president of the ASEAN Business Forum and the Singapore Retailers Association.

Dato' Dr Chan holds a Bachelor of Science in Physiology and Masters of Science in Pharmacology from Monash University, Melbourne, an Honorary Doctorate in Business Administration from Oxford Brookes University, UK, and an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Stirling, UK.



VIDHYA GANESAN

Associate Principal, McKinsey & Company

Vidhya is an Associate Principal and leader in McKinsey & Company's 'digitising governments' initiative. She works extensively with regional governments and private sector players on the delivery of public services, smart cities, digital maturity assessments, digital strategy and organisation.

Vidhya is a champion for women and leadership initiatives. At McKinsey, she focuses on establishing networks that sponsor the advancement of female consultants, and fostering a sustainable lifestyle and supportive environment for working mothers. She is also an active member of the 'INSEAD Women in Business' community and drives knowledge creation on topics such as advancing women in the workplace and the firm's centered leadership model.

Vidhya holds an MSc in Financial Economics (Distinction) from the University of Oxford where she was a Commonwealth Scholar and a BEng in Electrical Engineering, with a minor in technology entrepreneurship, from the National University of Singapore as a SIA-NOL scholar.



ROSALINE KOO

Founder and CEO, CXA

Rosaline is the founder and CEO of CXA, Asia's first insurance wellness marketplace. Rosaline has 25 years of P&L and operational experience leading start-ups and corporate turnarounds in Asia and the US, delivering significant growth through launching new business models, products, countries and distribution channels. She supervised P&G factory lines in Iowa before working in eight different roles during her eight years at Bankers Trust Company in New York.

Rosaline launched two technology start-ups in Asia during the dot-com boom, before moving to her client ACE to lead alternative distribution channels for A&H insurance. She also ran Mercer Marsh Benefits in 14 countries across the Asia Pacific, growing the business by 800% over eight years. Rosaline graduated from UCLA with a Cybernetics degree and an MBA from Columbia University.



TRINA LIANG-LIN

President, Singapore Committee for UN Women

Trina is Managing Director at Templebridge Investments and President of the Singapore Committee for UN Women. She is a pioneer and specialist in the Asian bond market securities sector, and has held senior positions in a number of global investment banks.

Trina is the co-founder of Project Inspire, a global social enterprise competition for youth, and is one of the 100 BoardAgender champions in Singapore. She is a former President of the Financial Women's Association of Singapore (FWAS) and has sat on numerous boards and committees. In 2015, Trina was appointed co-chair of the President's Volunteer and Philanthropy Awards. She was voted Woman of the Year (Business and Finance) by Women's Weekly Magazine in 2006 and the World's 50 Most Inspiring Women Under 40 in 2010. Trina holds a Masters degree in Finance and Accounting from the London School of Economics and a Bachelors degree in Economics from the National University of Singapore.



CORINNA LIM

Executive Director, Association of Women for Action and Research

Corinna is the Executive Director of the Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE). Before her appointment in 2010, Corinna was an active member of AWARE, having served on two executive committees and several sub-committees. She led a number of projects, including the Report on 'Women Growing Older But Poorer' and the development of the Workplace Sexual Harassment Workshop. Corinna practised law for more than 10 years in Allen & Gledhill, Khattar Wong & Partners and Koh Ong & Partners. She provided free legal counselling at AWARE's Legal Clinic and was the principal drafter of the Domestic Violence Bill that former AWARE president, Dr Kanwaljit Sooin, tabled to Parliament. Corinna has a Masters in Public Administration (with focus on social entrepreneurship) from Columbia University and is a Fulbright Scholar. She graduated with an LLB from the National University of Singapore and was called to the Singapore Bar in 1988.



SYLVIA LIM

Member of the Parliament of Singapore

Sylvia is a Member of the Parliament of Singapore and Chair of the opposition Workers' Party of Singapore. In 2006, she earned a seat as a Non-Constituency Member of Parliament, and in the 2011 General Elections, she was a member of the victorious Workers' Party team who won Aljunied Group Representation Constituency (GRC), the first time in Singapore's history that an opposition party team won a GRC. Since 2011 she has been an elected MP for Aljunied constituency.

Having studied law in Singapore as well as in the United Kingdom, Sylvia has worked in public law enforcement in the Singapore Police Force as well as practising as a litigation lawyer in the private sector. For twelve years as an academic, she also taught and researched in the areas of criminal procedure, criminal justice and private security. She obtained a Master of Science in Criminal Justice from Michigan State University in 2014.



DR KANWALJIT SOIN

Surgeon

Dr Sooin has founded various organisations to help the status of women and the less advantaged, and was a Nominated Member of Parliament from 1992–1996. She was the founding President of WINGS in Singapore (Women's Initiative for Ageing Successfully). Dr Sooin was a founding member of AWARE and has served as its President. She was also a founding member of UNIFEM Singapore, and the Association of Women Doctors. She has served as the Chair of UNIFEM Singapore, and was a past President of International Women's Forum, Singapore. Her medical education was in Singapore at the National University of Singapore where she graduated top of her class in 1966 with MBBS (Hons) with medals for every subject. Dr Sooin then obtained further degrees from Australia and Singapore – FRACS and MMed in Surgery. She was a Colombo Plan Scholar for hand surgery in 1972 to Australia.



SU-YEN WONG
CEO, Human Capital Leadership Institute

Su-Yen is Chief Executive Officer of the Human Capital Leadership Institute, which was established to develop global leaders with a strong understanding of leading in Asia, as well as to develop Asian leaders on the global stage. She is Chairman of the Board of Nera Telecommunications, a global telecom and IT solutions provider, as well as an Independent Director at MediaCorp and at NTUC First Campus.

Previously Su-Yen was Chairman (Singapore) for Marsh & McLennan Companies, and Managing Director, Southeast Asia at Mercer, and Asia Managing Partner for the Communications, Information & Entertainment practice at Oliver Wyman. Su-Yen is also an active member of the Singapore Institute of Directors, Women Corporate Directors, and the Young Presidents' Organisation. She holds a BA (summa cum laude) in music and computer science from Linfield College and an MBA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



JEFF BULLWINKEL
Associate General Counsel and Regional Director of Corporate External and Legal Affairs, Asia Pacific and Japan, Microsoft

Jeff is based in Singapore and oversees Microsoft's corporate external and legal affairs teams across the region. He is a lead executive sponsor of Microsoft's Diversity & Inclusion initiatives in the Asia-Pacific, and has been a champion of women's leadership across Microsoft's business in the region.

Prior to joining Microsoft, Jeff was with Simpson Thacher & Bartlett, an international law firm based in New York. He also served as a federal prosecutor with the Office of International Affairs, Criminal Division, US Department of Justice, from 1996-2000, where he was responsible for a wide range of matters relating to international law.

Jeff graduated from Duke University with a Bachelor of Arts and received his law degree from New York University. He is a member of the New York State Bar.

THAILAND



DR NATTHA KOMOLVADHIN
News Editor and Anchor, Thai Public Broadcasting Service

Nattha is a TV journalist and News editor at the Thai Public Broadcasting Service (ThaiPBS). She hosts a daily news analysis program 'This is Thai PBS' and is one of the hosts of 'Tob Jote', an interview program. She did research and taught Masters-level students at the Women's Studies Center at Chiang Mai University for two years before assuming her full time post in journalism at the ThaiPBS.

Nattha has also worked at the BBC World Service, Thai section, and was selected to participate in the International Visitors Leadership Program, Edward Murrow's program of the US State Department in 2012 and became an Eisenhower Fellow in 2013. She finished her first degree at Assumption University (ABAC) at the Faculty of Arts, majoring in Business English with cum laude.

She attained an MSc in Sociology and PhD in Gender Studies at the London School of Economics under a Royal Thai Government scholarship.



LINDA WATTANAWEKIN
Deputy Secretary, Federation of Business and Professional Women's Association of Thailand

Linda was appointed as the Deputy Secretary of The Federation of Business and Professional Women's Association of Thailand Under the Royal Patronage of HM The Queen in 2014. She is currently also a director of a group of privately owned companies based in Thailand that represent leading brands of consumer and industrial products. Her accomplishments as a business leader stem from more than 20 years of experience dealing with international companies in various business fields in both industrial and consumer markets.

Linda has an extensive background in the display and exhibition business. Her contribution to the community began with the Kiat Ruammit Foundation for Education in 2013. In August of 2015 she joined the Thai Chamber of Commerce - Committee on Life and Social Promotion for Children, Youth, Women, and Elderly.

VIETNAM



TON-NU-THI NINH
President, Ho Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation

Madame Ninh is President of the Ho Chi Minh City Peace and Development Foundation and Director of the Tri Viet Center for Social & Educational Studies. As an academic, career diplomat, elected official (Vice-Chair, Foreign Affairs Committee, Vietnam's National Assembly) and an educational and sociocultural ambassador, Madame Ninh has worked to build bridges of understanding and cooperation between Vietnam and the world.

Madame Ninh has organised a series of events on female empowerment, including panel debates on women in leadership and the glass ceiling and on Vietnamese women CEOs. She regularly speaks at various conferences and workshops to promote gender equality and women's leadership. Her recent book 'Thinking and Sharing' – which includes the foreword to the Vietnamese edition of Sheryl Sandberg's 'Lean In' – dedicates a large part to the web of women issues.

Madame Ninh is the recipient of the French Legion d'Honneur (Commandeur), the Belgian Order of Leopold II, and the Vietnamese Medal of Labor – First Class.

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