



Building stronger civil society.  
Advancing the *right* to health.

### Stay Connected

ASIA CATALYST  
[www.asiacatalyst.org](http://www.asiacatalyst.org)

1270 Broadway, Suite 1109  
New York, NY 10001

/ AsiaCatalyst

@ AsiaCatalyst

Sign up for our email list  
at [asiacatalyst.org](http://asiacatalyst.org)

Asia Catalyst is a tax-exempt 501(c)3 organization registered in the United States that relies on the financial support of individuals and grant-making organizations. We maintain minimal overhead in the U.S. so that our funds get to Asia, where they are needed most.

To find out more, please visit: [www.asiacatalyst.org](http://www.asiacatalyst.org).



# ANNUAL REPORT 2015

## OUR YEAR OF IMPACT



# 2015: OUR YEAR OF IMPACT

Who We Are .....	2
A Letter From Our Leadership.....	3
2015: Our Year of Impact.....	4
Community-Focused Results .....	6
What We're Working Towards.....	8
Methodology.....	10
Capacity Building & Community Initiatives.....	11
Regional Rights Training .....	12
Case Study: Making Waves in Myanmar.....	14
The CBO Catalyst.....	16
Tailored Coaching.....	18
Advocacy, Research & Policy.....	20
Continuing the Campaign.....	21
Documenting Police Practices in China.....	22
Case Study: The Beijing LGBT Center.....	23
Community Success.....	30
Leadership and Our Board.....	35
Thank you, Donors and Friends.....	36
Financials.....	37

A community leader from China examines her peers' human rights advocacy strategies at an Asia Catalyst workshop in Bangkok, Thailand. Asia Catalyst photo, 2015.

CONTACT ASIA CATALYST

1270 Broadway, Suite 1109, New York, NY 10001  
+1 212. 967. 2123  
info@asiacatalyst.org



A civil society leader gives a presentation at an Asia Catalyst workshop in Beijing.  
Asia Catalyst photo, 2015.

**A**SIA CATALYST builds strong civil society and advances the right to health for marginalized groups in Asia. We train community-based organizations (CBOs) to meet high standards of effective and democratic governance, to establish a stable foundation for future growth, and to conduct rigorous human rights research and advocacy. We are an independent organization that places the needs of marginalized communities at the center of national, regional, and international policy making.

Across Asia, marginalized communities face serious challenges in accessing and protecting a broad array of human rights. They are often without the skills or resources to address systemic or acute abuses. Asia Catalyst addresses these challenges through rigorous and tailored capacity building, research, and advocacy support to emerging civil society leaders and organizations in the region.

Graduates of Asia Catalyst's intensive tailored programming are achieving substantive advocacy gains on behalf of their communities. Our reports and expertise are regularly cited in the international press, including articles and citations on the front page of The New York Times, and in the South China Morning Post, The Guardian, the BBC, The Wall Street Journal, The Harvard Kennedy LGBTQ Policy Journal, and the prestigious Lancet medical journal.

Asia Catalyst was incorporated on November 28, 2006 and received 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit status in the United States of America on July 25, 2007. On April 23, 2015, Asia Catalyst was registered as a company in Hong Kong.

## THANK YOU FOR SHARING 2015 WITH US



Dear Friends,

This year, Asia Catalyst strengthened and significantly expanded our partnerships and programming in Southeast Asia, while continuing our core capacity building and high quality advocacy work in China. We also invested in new expert staff and resources to support our regional expansion, and now have a team of twelve people working across three offices in New York, Beijing, and Bangkok.

We are so proud to have established ourselves in Bangkok, a major strategic goal of the organization. The Bangkok office will increase our access to policy and decision making in the region, as well as provide a much more convenient and cost-effective venue for our programming in Southeast Asia. This year, we also brought on full-time Monitoring and Evaluation capacity; an integral part of ensuring Asia Catalyst's effective and high quality programming.

Our Regional Rights Training program kicked off at the beginning of the year. Partners from Cambodia, China, Myanmar, and Viet Nam were able to benefit from Asia Catalyst's almost ten years' experience of capacity building and human rights advocacy expertise—with fantastic results. The activists in the program forged new national and regional partnerships with peer organizations, and embarked on ambitious human rights advocacy projects to end discrimination against people living with HIV in their communities.

Charmain was able to visit Myanmar for the first time in April, meeting with a cross section of embassy, UN, and community partners, as well as catching up with staff in Beijing in August to hear about the challenges of community activism in China, and the ways our partners are succeeding at overcoming them.

We remain a small organization committed to ensuring the right to health for the most marginalized communities in Asia. We hope you enjoy the story of our year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHARMAIN MOHAMED'.

CHARMAIN MOHAMED, Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'YVONNE Y.F. CHAN'.

YVONNE Y.F. CHAN, Board Chair and Treasurer

# 2015

## OUR YEAR OF IMPACT: A SNAPSHOT



### CHINA HOLDS FIRST EVER TRANSGENDER CONSULTATION

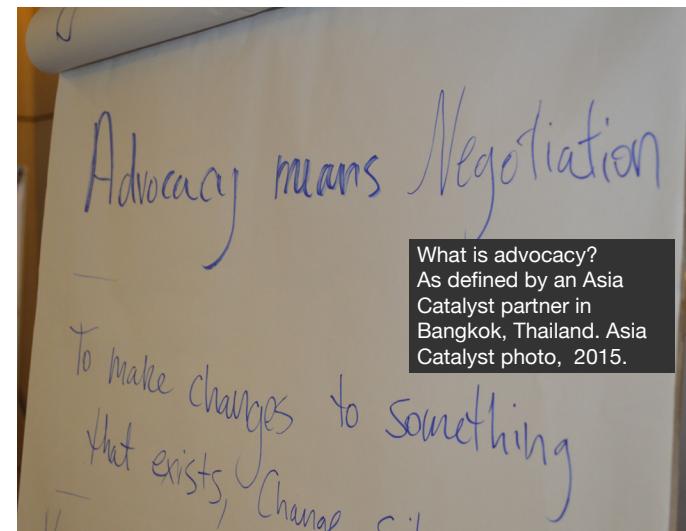
As a result of Asia Catalyst's 2014 research and advocacy project with Chinese CBOs on the vulnerability of transgender female sex workers to HIV, UNDP China organized China's first ever **National Consultation on Trans\* People and HIV**. The first-of-its kind meeting took place in July 2015 and included a diverse representation of Chinese trans\* community representatives, government officials, academics and regional trans\* experts.

**"Today, we are making history—the first meeting on trans issues in China. It is the beginning of our response to trans people."**

-Dr. Wu Zunyou, Director of China's National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention

### FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS

In 2015, Asia Catalyst worked with communities in Cambodia, China, Viet Nam, and Myanmar who regularly experience discrimination because of their HIV status. Program partners came together to research and **interview 202 people** affected by discrimination across all four countries, resulting in an unparalleled evidence base to strengthen **human rights advocacy** to end discrimination across the region.



### INCREASED SUSTAINABILITY OF ASIAN CBOS

As a result of Asia Catalyst training on fundraising and strategic planning, several partners in China this year increased their funding, receiving **first-time grants** from the British Embassy and The Canada Fund for human rights advocacy projects.

### NEW RESOURCES, NEW TRANSLATIONS

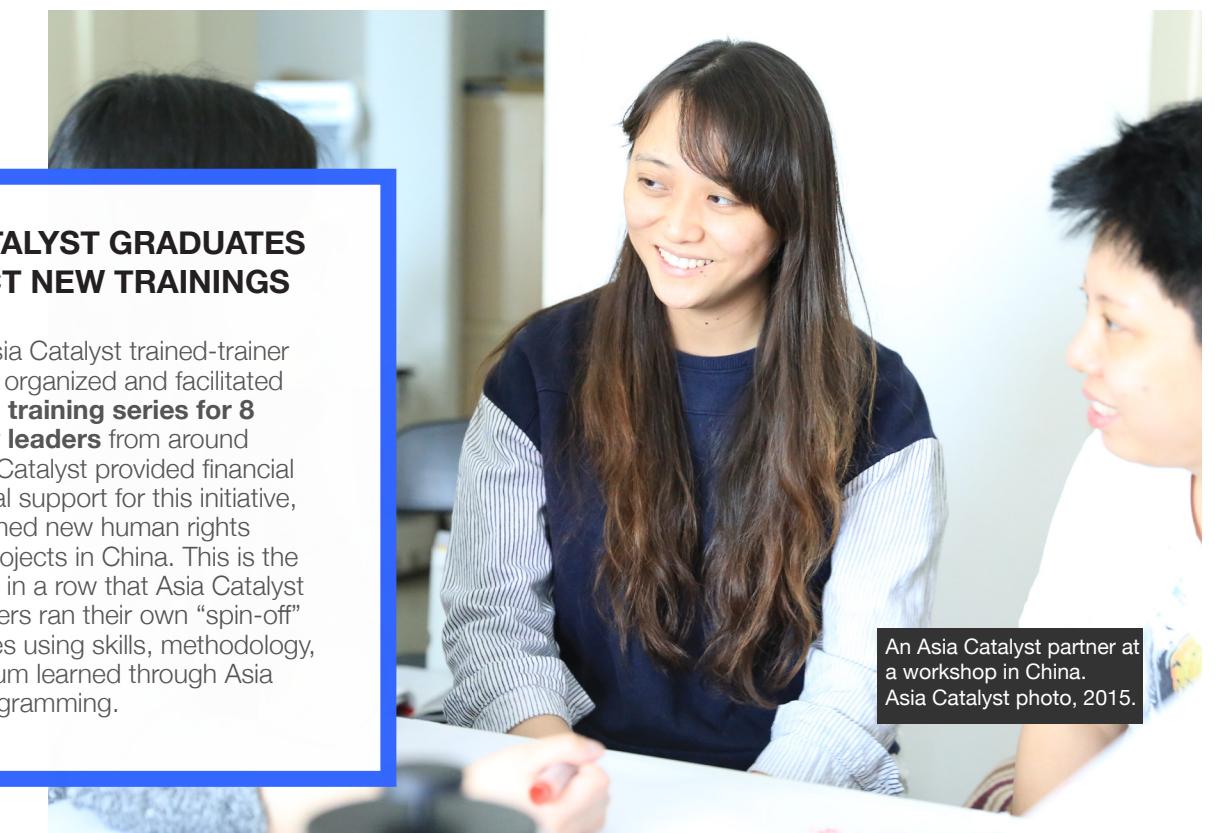
Asia Catalyst significantly expanded its landmark organizational management training tool, the **Nonprofit Survival Guide**, in English and Chinese languages this year. The updated Survival Guide includes an expansion of all existing materials and three entirely new chapters of resources for grassroots groups. A **newly launched website** provides a user-friendly platform for groups around the globe to access and download this resource and more.

### SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION IN CHINA

As a result of Asia Catalyst training and support, four community organizations from three Chinese cities were able to document **the impact of police practices on the health of sex workers**. The groups collectively designed and conducted over 600 interviews with affected individuals, and used the information to compile an unprecedented data base of evidence chronicling the impact of police policy on HIV prevention efforts.

### ASIA CATALYST GRADUATES CONDUCT NEW TRAININGS

This year, Asia Catalyst trained-trainer Zhao Zheng organized and facilitated **a year-long training series for 8 community leaders** from around China. Asia Catalyst provided financial and technical support for this initiative, which launched new human rights advocacy projects in China. This is the second year in a row that Asia Catalyst trained-trainers ran their own "spin-off" training series using skills, methodology, and curriculum learned through Asia Catalyst programming.



**BENEFICIARY GROWTH:**  
**26** community organizations serving over **45,000** marginalized community members in **4** Asian countries in Asia Catalyst training this year.

# COMMUNITY-FOCUSED RESULTS

## A movement is spreading

"When I first met Asia Catalyst, I was interested in human rights-like what violations did my community experience? I read *Know It, Prove It, Change It*, and found Asia Catalyst's trainings so effective. So I asked myself, how can I improve the lives of sex workers in Myanmar? I tweaked the case studies in Asia Catalyst's curriculum to apply specifically to my community, in all three parts of the curriculum. **In 2015, I am now delivering full-scale trainings directly to my community.** Sex workers should know what their human rights are. They are human! With these trainings based on Asia Catalyst's curriculum, these communities now know how to improve their lives by conducting advocacy. And I will keep doing trainings."

-Kay Thi Win,  
Asia Catalyst Partner since 2010



**“**We now receive support from UNAIDS Viet Nam because UNAIDS Viet Nam received an email from the regional UNAIDS office and Asia Catalyst. **”**

– Kids Sun Group, Viet Nam  
2015 Regional Rights Training participant

**“**Because of Asia Catalyst's training, we have submitted a joint letter to the mayor and, through our petition, the financial aid policy towards people living with HIV has now been changed. **”**

– Asia Catalyst partner since 2014

**“**As a result of our advocacy work following Asia Catalyst's training, in 2012, Beijing included the Anti-rejection Drugs after Lung Transplants into the medical insurance reimbursable category. In 2014, our advocacy work also helped to make Besentan (a kind of Pulmonary Hypertension drug) into the medical insurance's reimbursable category in Shenzhen. **”**

– 2014 CBO Catalyst participant

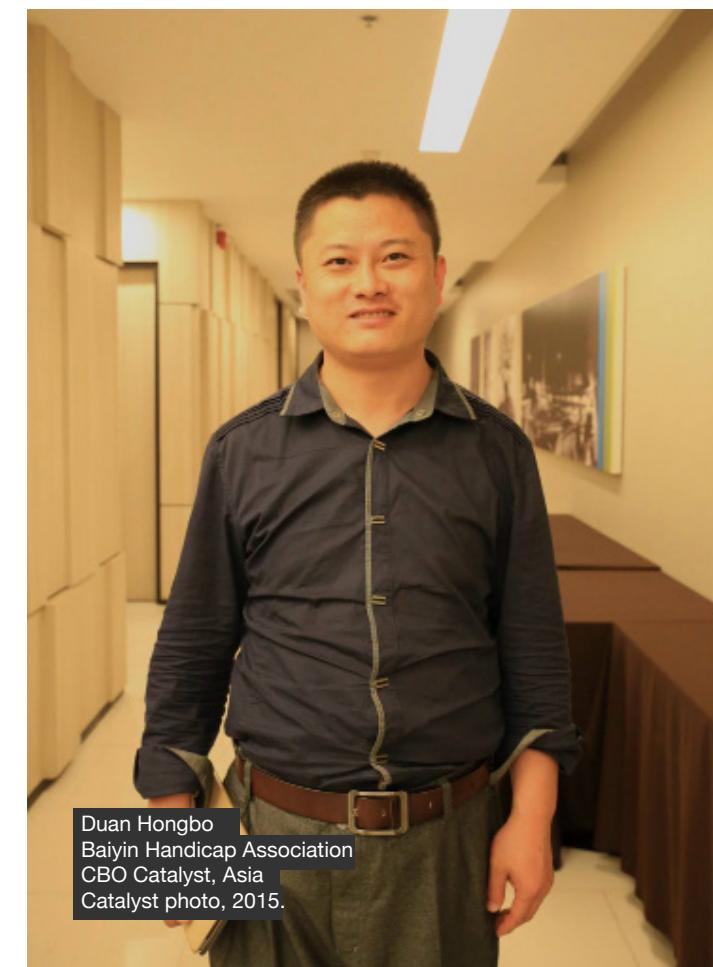
**“**The rainbow marathon and 5.17 rainbow bike tour we organized [with guidance from Asia Catalyst] has taken place four times in four consecutive years. These activities have generated a certain degree of popularity in the local city and across the nation. They have played a constructive role in improving the local [LGBT] communities' living situation. **”**

– Asia Catalyst partner, 2015

Why did you become involved in rights of PLHIV and Key Populations (KP) issues?

**I am also PLHIV and we should involved actively to know and to share our Rights**

Participants in Asia Catalyst's programs examine their motivations to conduct human rights advocacy for marginalized communities. Asia Catalyst photo, 2015.



## Applying skills and getting results, immediately

In November 2015, Duan Hongbo was returning from the fourth **CBO Catalyst** workshop in Bangkok when he was refused admittance to his layover flight in Chengdu, China. The airline, China Eastern Airlines, refused to admit Duan, who has a visual impairment, for "being unaccompanied."

This practice is discriminatory and violates Duan Hongbo's protected rights. Armed with skills and knowledge learned with Asia Catalyst, Duan Hongbo immediately negotiated with the airline. With the help of a 2013 CBO Catalyst graduate who lives in Chengdu, he also contacted the local newspaper to raise public awareness on the issue.

As a result of his quick action, China Eastern Airlines awarded Duan a free flight and accommodation. The airline's management made public apologies in the press, admitting wrong-doing. Privately, the airline also promised to change its discriminatory policy of not admitting "unaccompanied" disabled people on flights and to protect the rights of disabled people.

Duan Hongbo said, "This is very unexpected. I applied what I learned from Asia Catalyst's workshops so immediately, and it turned out to be highly effective for my case!"

Duan is now working with CBO leaders in Asia Catalyst's network to file a lawsuit against China Eastern Airlines. The lawsuit is one step in a new national-level strategic advocacy plan developed with Asia Catalyst to support the rights of people living with disabilities across China.



" We are carrying out interviews with gay and bisexual men living with HIV here in Viet Nam to document the discrimination they face in healthcare settings. The questionnaire we developed with Asia Catalyst is very easy to use and allows people to share their experiences openly.

I feel empowered by the knowledge I have gained on human rights with Asia Catalyst. I can now speak confidently when we attend other events. We need more opportunities to learn about rights issues. "

- Asia Catalyst partner from Viet Nam

## WORKING TOWARDS: Strong civil society advancing the *right* to health

Asia Catalyst's long term mission is to create an environment wherein stable, independent Asian CBOs have the space and capacity to conduct effective advocacy on the right to health.

Chinese civil society leaders participate in an Asia Catalyst workshop in Bangkok, Thailand. Asia Catalyst photo, April 2015.



Asia Catalyst evaluates training impact for a CBO in Hangzhou, China. Asia Catalyst photo, 2015.

## Capacity Building & Community Initiatives

Asia Catalyst's Capacity Building & Community Initiatives team runs three major programs: The Regional Rights Training program, The CBO Catalyst, and the Tailored Coaching program. In 2015, Asia Catalyst provided substantial training and support for twenty-two organizations in four countries via these programs.



CBO leaders from Cambodia develop human rights advocacy plans during Asia Catalyst's Regional Rights Training workshop. Asia Catalyst photo, 2015.



An LGBT CBO from Hangzhou, China completes a strategic planning activity during a Tailored Coaching workshop. The group learned volunteer management and effective task division from Asia Catalyst. Subsequently, they successfully navigated a staffing crisis and established a new official office that increased collaboration and shared resources with another local LGBT organization. Asia Catalyst photo, 2015.

### Our methodology

Asia Catalyst supports civil society development and empowerment through tailored capacity building, research, and advocacy on issues of most concern to marginalized communities in Asia.

We use an innovative, responsive model to ensure community voice and need is at the heart of all programming. We incorporate a training-of-trainers methodology into all of our long-term programs to ensure sustainability, and continuously evaluate and adjust our approach to maximize impact and quality. We support our partners to become leading advocates at the local, national, and global levels.

# REGIONAL RIGHTS TRAINING

## The problem statement

Stigma and discrimination are among the main barriers to HIV prevention, treatment, and care. For the 4.9 million people living with HIV (PLHIV) in Asia and the Pacific, HIV-related discrimination reduces overall access to healthcare by 33% (People Living with HIV Stigma Index, UNAIDS). Marginalized groups like LGBT persons, sex workers, and people who use drugs are disproportionately affected.

Most HIV services in Asia prioritize a 'test and treat' government-led response, which preclude meaningful participation in program design by PLHIV. Strong community

involvement is crucial to ending the epidemic and protecting the human rights of people living with HIV and other affected populations. Community based organizations (CBOs) can create the social, political, legal, and financial environment needed to effectively respond to the epidemic and prevent further infections. However, CBOs around Asia are often ill-equipped to effectively represent the communities they serve and lack vital skills and resources to advocate for human rights, change policy, and combat discrimination.



## Stopping discrimination in its tracks

In December 2014, Asia Catalyst launched the first cycle of the Regional Rights Training (RRT) program. This 18-month program works with eight CBOs representing PLHIV and other affected populations from Cambodia, China, Myanmar, and Viet Nam. The RRT program aims to increase the human rights knowledge of these organizations, develop their skills to conduct human rights research and documentation, and build their capacity to develop and implement evidence-based advocacy plans.

In order to effectively train participants in the full spectrum of human rights knowledge, documentation and advocacy, Asia Catalyst convened representatives from all 8 organizations for three multi-day training workshops in Bangkok throughout 2015. Asia Catalyst tailor-designed a new curriculum to meet the needs of the participating groups, and gave follow-up assignments after each workshop to ensure the training had been absorbed. Between workshops,

participants held internal coaching sessions within their community organizations and peer networks, increasing the capacity of 209 staff, volunteers, and community members on human rights frameworks, documentation, and advocacy.

With the skills and knowledge learned from Asia Catalyst's training, the participating CBOs were able to **interview 202 people on issues of discrimination** against community members due to their HIV status. Each group used this evidence base to design and support their **advocacy strategy** and, in August 2015, Asia Catalyst provided seed funding (US \$3000) to each CBO to implement these strategies. Participants are working in both their own localities and in coalition with other program participants from around Asia, ensuring the impact will be local as well as regional. The 8 CBOs represent communities totaling 9,199 people across four countries.

### 8 COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

representing **9,199** marginalized community members

### from 4 countries

### trained in 3 WORKSHOPS

interviewed **202 marginalized persons** to document human rights violations

Implementing comprehensive evidence-based **human rights advocacy**, with support and seed funding from Asia Catalyst

With support from Asia Catalyst, 8 CBOs are currently implementing advocacy to end discrimination in Asia. The plans focus on the following issues:

#### Myanmar:

- 1) Discriminatory fees charged to sex workers living with HIV when accessing health services
- 2) Discriminatory fees charged to people living with HIV when accessing health services

#### China:

- 1) Discrimination against transgender persons living with HIV when accessing all types of surgery
- 2) Discrimination against gay and bisexual men living with HIV when accessing all types of surgery



#### Cambodia:

- 1) Discrimination against women living with HIV when accessing childbirth services
- 2) Discrimination against women living with HIV when accessing sexual and reproductive health services

#### Viet Nam:

- 1) Discrimination against women living with HIV when accessing sexual and reproductive health services
- 2) Discrimination against gay and bisexual men living with HIV when accessing health services

# CASE STUDY: MAKING WAVES IN MYANMAR

Kay Thi Win is a leading sex worker rights advocate who has been working on addressing the human rights issues of sex workers in Myanmar—a highly marginalized community in a restrictive environment. Kay Thi has been a partner of Asia Catalyst for nearly five years, but began her journey as a human rights advocate over a decade ago. In 2003, she knew the challenges and needs of Myanmar's sex workers intimately, as she was a sex worker herself. It was not until she started working for **Population Services International** (PSI), one of the largest NGOs in the country, that she learned that sex workers had human rights. In 2005, she became a member of the **Asia-Pacific Network for Sex Workers** (APNSW), and gradually began organizing within the sex worker community.

In November 2009, Kay Thi and other sex workers founded **Myanmar's National Network of Sex Workers** (NNSW), a national, regional, and global community network. Although NNSW had been successful in receiving funding from The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the CBO lacked a clear strategic plan for both programming and organizational growth. Thus, in 2010, NNSW applied for **Asia Catalyst's Tailored Coaching program** to address this gap

in organizational management. Over the next few months, Asia Catalyst trained NNSW on organizational development skills and strategic planning, helping the budding group to lay the groundwork for continued growth.

To desensitize its work and operate with the support of the government, NNSW registered legally as a nonprofit organization called **Aye Myanmar Association** (AMA); the new name was especially fitting as the word "ama" means "sister" in Burmese and "mother" in several other Asian languages. Today, AMA remains a national network of sex workers. The organization, which began as a fully volunteer-based network, has grown to include 4 full-time staff and 9 part-time outreach workers in different parts of Myanmar. It plans to expand its outreach, referral services, and other activities to new cities. Its mission: to reduce widespread stigma that harms sex workers and associated groups, and increase access to health services through policy reform.

Kay Thi identifies ending Myanmar's high stigma levels against sex workers as a key advocacy objective. She says, "Stigma, discrimination and punitive laws make a lot of problems in the lives of [Myanmar's] sex workers. If they didn't face stigma and discrimination, sex workers would access their health services on time,

**" People are talking about human rights in Myanmar now, but it's broad. Now I see in my country, only a few know about human rights, the [sex worker] community does not know exactly what human rights are, what they can access and how. When I do the Asia Catalyst trainings with members of my community, I help them understand human rights. "**



Kay Thi Win. Photo: Emerging Women of Burma documentary, 2014.

Joins APNSW	Found Myanmar's National Network of Sex Workers	Asia Catalyst Tailored Coaching	Asia Catalyst Human Rights Training	Trains groups in Myanmar & Bangladesh on human rights	Launches full-scale human rights training series for sex workers across Myanmar
2005	2009	2010	2013	2014	2015

## A Chronology of Kay Thi's Development as a Community Leader

when needed. Fear of being arrested also causes them to not access their health services on time".

With these concerns in mind, in 2013 Kay Thi attended **Asia Catalyst's Human Rights Training Program** and was introduced to Know It, Prove It, Change It. The Asia Catalyst human rights documentation and advocacy curriculum helped Kay Thi gain a deeper understanding of her community's human rights. It also gave her the skills she needed to deliver trainings using Asia Catalyst's materials. "For me personally, I have had two long-term trainings from Asia Catalyst (Tailored Coaching and Human Rights Training). The trainings were easy to learn for community organizations, and easy to share among community members. I understand how to develop organizations, how to better organize AMA, and Know It, Prove It, Change It helped me better understand and develop my own trainings".

As a part of the Human Rights Training, Kay Thi conducted **internal trainings** on Asia Catalyst's curriculum with the staff of AMA. This resulted in **AMA independently delivering human rights trainings** for groups in Bago, Yangon, Mandalay, Irrawaddy, and Shan State in Myanmar. Kay Thi says, "AMA now understands about research and advocacy and the importance of sharing the knowledge within the organization and amongst the network—they invited sex workers and volunteers [to trainings] and transfer their learning to others."

Since 2013, Kay Thi has focused on using her knowledge and skills at the country level in Myanmar. She has independently delivered **trainings across Myanmar for 35 sex workers** aimed at helping them to understand their human rights; comprehend how violations affect them; and learn how they can improve their lives. **She has also used Know It, Prove It, Change It to train 25 sex worker groups** in collaboration with other CBOs.

In 2015, Kay Thi organized **a full-scale human rights training series that adopted Know It, Prove It, Change It** to apply specifically to the needs of sex workers in Myanmar. This spin-off

training series represents Asia Catalyst's ideal training outcome, with the local community fully owning and adopting Asia Catalyst materials to sustainably and responsibly entrench skills and knowledge. The spin-off training series is a full year-long workshop series utilizing Asia Catalyst's training methodology and consists of three workshops for a group of sex worker CBOs from across Myanmar. Kay Thi oversaw all three workshops for this program.

Recently, Kay Thi felt ready to take her trainings to the regional level. With support from the HIV/AIDS Research and Welfare Centre, she delivered **a training on Change It to 15 sex workers in Bangladesh**. She reports that the training was successful, and that the Bangladeshi participants are now eager to receive trainings on both Know It, and Prove It.

In February 2014, Kay Thi was appointed as the new Coordinator of APNSW, in recognition of her skills, expertise and dedication to ending human rights violations against sex workers in the region. She is also now **on the board of the Global Network of Sex Work Projects** (NSWP), the international membership organization representing sex workers from around the world. Kay Thi also continues to provide guidance and support to AMA, as well as offering valuable assistance to Asia Catalyst. In 2015, Kay Thi served as an

**expert trainer during Asia Catalyst trainings** and helped to facilitate discussions for the current participants from Myanmar in the **Regional Rights Training program**, helping to overcome language and technical knowledge barriers. She is presently working on securing funding to expand her Asia Catalyst based training series to new members of APNSW.

# THE CBO CATALYST

## Growing Advocacy and Impact

Community-based advocacy by marginalized groups is not just possible—it is already happening in richly varied and often extremely effective ways across Asia. Asia Catalyst believes that community based organizations (CBOs) are best positioned to conduct their own advocacy. They have a unique understanding of the circumstances in which they work and the priority issues of the communities they represent.

Asia Catalyst's seminal program, the CBO Catalyst, is a capacity building program for CBO leaders from marginalized groups in Asia. The CBO Catalyst

includes a fully integrated training-of-trainer component, entrenching knowledge, skills and resources within the communities served, enabling community trainers to run their own CBO Catalyst programs for another cohort of leaders.

This year, a group of 8 CBO leaders from China came together for capacity building workshops that merged organizational management skills with rights-based advocacy. 2 additional activists joined as trainers-in-training. Participants formed lasting coalitions and are now conducting strategic advocacy on their communities' priority issues across China.

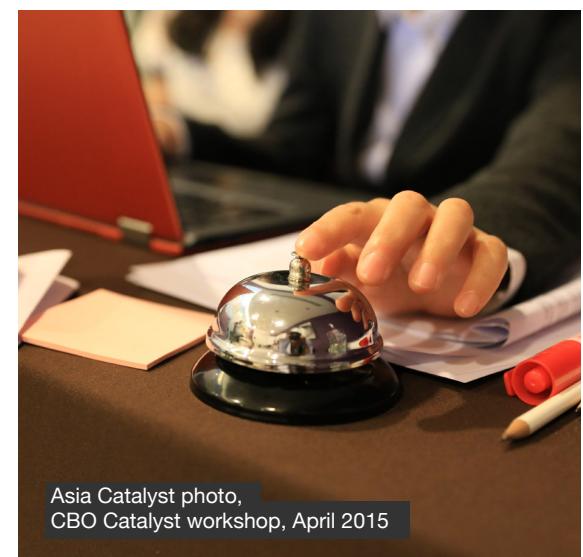
## Community participants this year include:

**8 Chinese CBOs**

**From 7 Provinces, including traditionally underserved areas like Xi'an**



Asia Catalyst photo,  
CBO Catalyst workshop, April 2015



Asia Catalyst photo,  
CBO Catalyst workshop, April 2015

**And 2 trainers-in-training, entrenching Asia Catalyst's program deeper in the community**

## Continuous impact

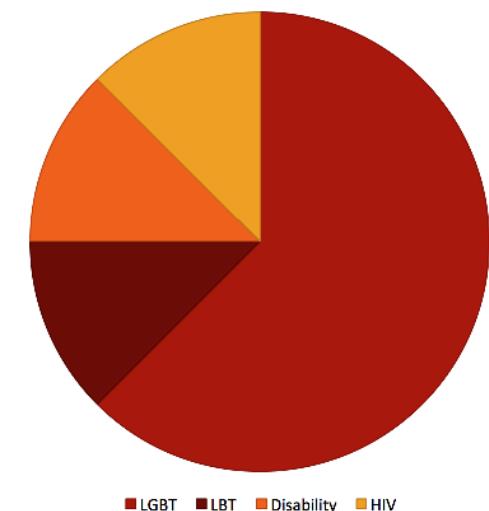
Groups that Asia Catalyst train go on to conduct their own capacity building with members of their communities and other peer organizations. This happens informally, but also through Asia Catalyst's training of trainers program. In 2015, Asia Catalyst supported a trained-trainer from the 2014 CBO Catalyst program to **run his own innovative version of our yearlong training series, training a further 8 CBOs** in organizational management and human rights advocacy. This is the second Asia Catalyst trained-trainer who has run and completed a capacity building workshop series for other CBOs, using skills, curriculum and methodology gained through participation in Asia Catalyst programming.

## Implemented advocacy projects

As a part of the CBO Catalyst program, all participants develop human rights advocacy plans to meet the needs of their communities. The top three plans are awarded Asia Catalyst sub-grants for implementation, chosen by peer vote.

The three subgranted campaigns for 2015 aim to: **increase participation by the disabled community in Gansu Province on policies and decision-making directly affecting them; ensure access to post-exposure prophylaxis for gay and bisexual men and healthcare providers in Anhui Province; and improve sex and gender education in middle schools in Xi'an.**

2015 CBO Catalyst participants serve these communities in China:



## An Activist's Perspective

**"We are pushing for social inclusion for disabled people in China. Our work includes two parts: mainstream society's acceptance of the disabled community and the active integration of disabled people. The disabled still face many challenges in our daily lives. And, generally, disabled people are reluctant to identify themselves.**

**Take me as an example; I have a congenital eyesight disability, which is incurable. I have experienced many inconveniences. While I was a student, there were no books with large text or audio books in my school in China. As far as I know, many other countries do have these things. The needs of people with vision disabilities were not considered while making this electronic screen or that landmark on the road. This troubles me a lot. This, this social inclusion, can only be achieved by more advocacy activities. I know this training will go deep into advocacy, which is great for us!"**

**- Duan Hongbo, Gansu Province  
Disabled Association Baiyin**



Asia Catalyst photo,  
CBO Catalyst workshop, April 2015



"The problem tree introduced by Asia Catalyst is a very good technique for us to explore complex issues. With it, we can conduct inquiry and find the root of problems facing our community. If we keep using this technique in the future, both for advocacy and in our counseling programs, we will solve increasingly complex problems."

-Participant from Xinjiang Tiantong Health Workgroup, a CBO serving PLHIV and LGBT persons.

## Tailored Coaching

Asia Catalyst's Tailored Coaching program delivers specialized, issue-specific training to CBOs with a specific skillset need, such as strategic planning, fundraising, volunteer management, or advocacy design. In 2015, Asia Catalyst delivered Tailored Coaching to 6 community-based organizations representing LGBT communities, people living with HIV, and people living with disabilities in China. Each coaching program was tailor designed to meet the needs of the CBO, and involved multiple on-site workshops and follow-up support from Asia Catalyst over 3-4 months.

A participant in a Tailored Coaching workshop for Xiangyang Huakai Hangzhou LGBT. Asia Catalyst photo: March 2015.

## 2015 COACHING PARTNERS

### Baishui Zhu Can

Baishui Zhu Can is a CBO serving people living with disabilities in rural Shanxi Province, China. In 2015, Asia Catalyst supported this rural group to come to an organizational consensus and vision for their long term strategic plan, as well as how to manage their high-turnover volunteer base; key skills for the previously ad-hoc organization.

### Xiangyang Huakai Hangzhou LGBT

Xiangyang Huakai Hangzhou LGBT serves LGBT people in Zhejiang Province, Eastern China. This year, Asia Catalyst trained the CBO in key skills for strategic planning, budgeting, and volunteer management. The group is now using these skills to maximize staff efficiency and better serve their community.

### Xinjiang Tiantong Health Workgroup

A graduate of Asia Catalyst's CBO Catalyst program, Xinjiang Tiantong Health Workgroup is focused on the health of gay and bisexual men. Asia Catalyst helped the CBO to identify the most urgent problem facing gay and bisexual men living with HIV in Xinjiang: discrimination in healthcare settings. AC then helped the group develop a strategic advocacy plan to address the issue, which the group is now implementing, targeting five hospitals in two districts in Urumqi City, China.

### Beijing ISEEK

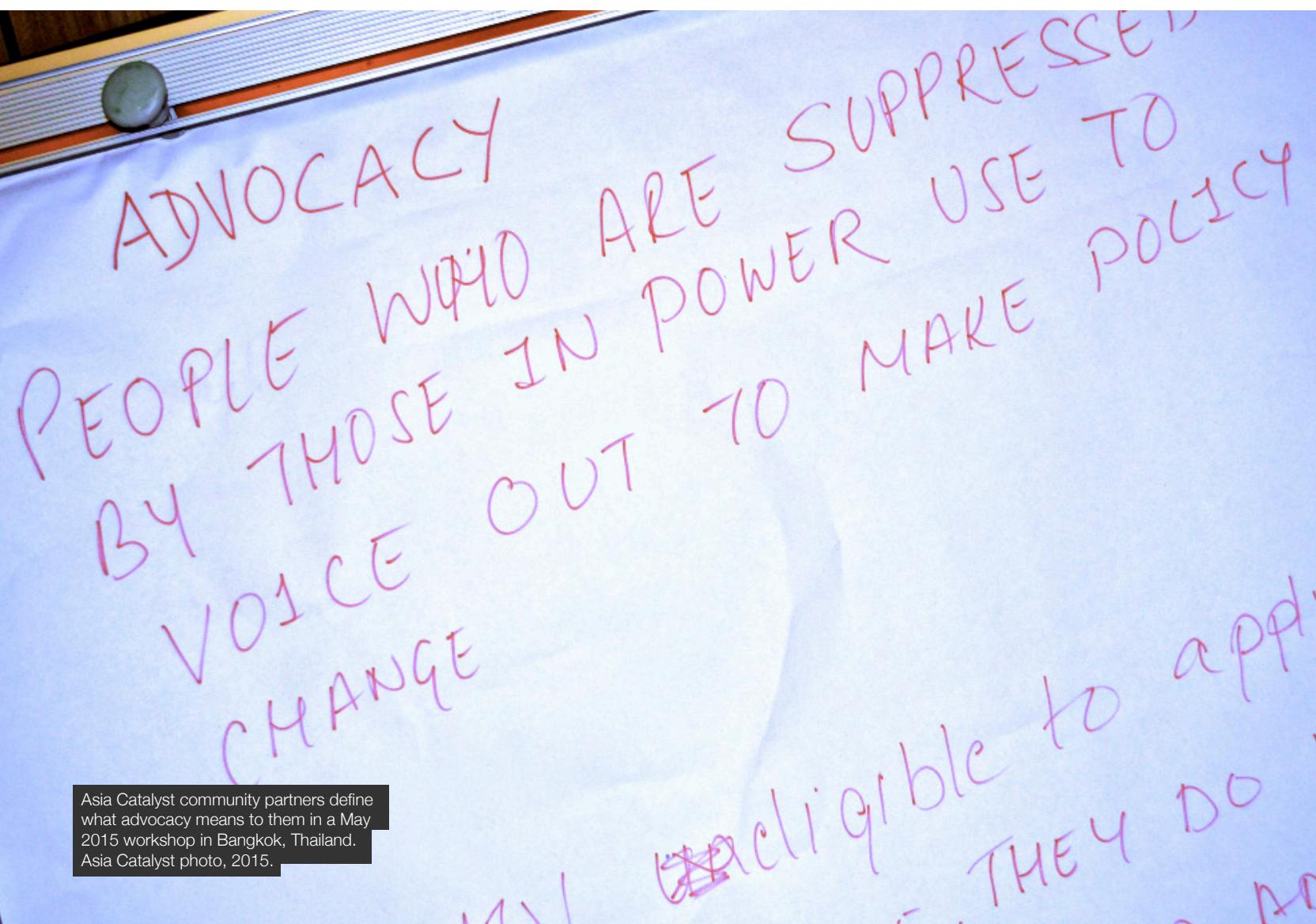
With coaching from Asia Catalyst, this Pulmonary Hypertension CBO developed a three-year advocacy plan to ensure the Beijing Health Insurance Department includes a key medicine for people living with Pulmonary Hypertension into the list of reimbursable medication for insurance. ISEEK's plan necessitates staff and community training and mobilization, so Asia Catalyst delivered additional coaching sessions on participatory training methodology for the CBO.

### Cangzhou Aiwujie

Cangzhou Aiwujie is now implementing an advocacy plan to combat discrimination against people living with HIV. The group is focusing on hospitals refusing to treat people living with HIV in Cangzhou. After developing its advocacy strategy with Asia Catalyst, the CBO is now developing a comprehensive timeline and budget, collecting relevant national and local HIV policies to inform their advocacy, and setting up a team to analyze their findings.

# Advocacy, Research, & Policy

Asia Catalyst understands the importance of enacting policy change at the highest levels. To that end we engage in strategic, independent, and collaborative evidence-based advocacy, aimed at ending discrimination and increasing human rights protections for all. In 2015, Asia Catalyst continued advocacy on increasing non-discriminatory access to health services for transgender people in China, as well as embarking on a one year documentation and advocacy project to highlight the negative impact of police practices on sex workers' vulnerability to HIV in China.



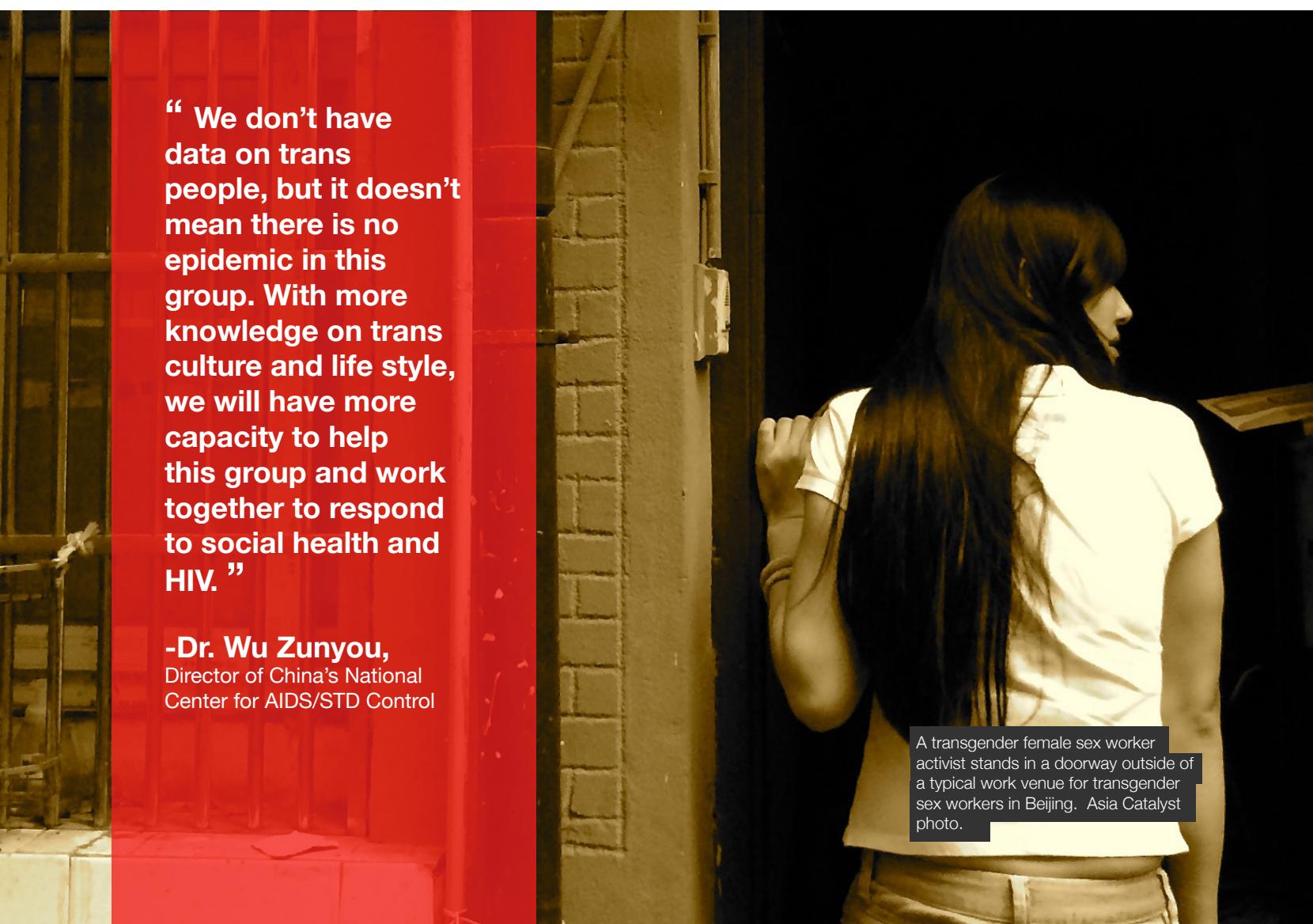
## CONTINUING THE CAMPAIGN

In 2014, Asia Catalyst partnered with two Chinese community based organizations to document the living conditions of China's **transgender female sex workers**. As a direct result of Asia Catalyst's research and continued advocacy on transgender sex workers' vulnerability to HIV, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) China organized **China's first-ever national consultation on trans\* people and HIV** in July 2015. This consultation addressed the current knowledge gap about transgender persons' vulnerability to HIV in China, and built consensus on the importance of responding to transgender persons' needs and improving HIV interventions for this population. To bolster community participation, Asia Catalyst facilitated a pre-meeting workshop that helped ten transgender leaders form recommendations and strategies ahead of the consultation. UNDP also invited Asia Catalyst to present findings and recommendations from its groundbreaking 2014 report: *My Life is Too Dark to See the Light*.

This multi-stakeholder meeting included a diverse

representation of transgender persons, government officials, and civil society leaders. This was particularly important as, in China, representatives of the transgender community rarely have the opportunity to engage with policy-makers and influence the policies directly affecting them. International collaboration led to an important closed-door meeting between the Head of India's National AIDS Control Programme and Dr. Wu Zunyou, the Head of China's National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention.

At the end of meeting, community participants were invited to submit **recommendations to the government**, which included: more extensive work on data collection and evidence of HIV among the transgender population, especially among transgender sex workers as they are most vulnerable to HIV transmission; creation of more accessible government counseling and health care service programs; and engagement between community based organizations and the China CDC for technical and practical support on issues related to HIV.



**" We don't have data on trans people, but it doesn't mean there is no epidemic in this group. With more knowledge on trans culture and life style, we will have more capacity to help this group and work together to respond to social health and HIV. "**

**-Dr. Wu Zunyou,**  
Director of China's National Center for AIDS/STD Control

A transgender female sex worker activist stands in a doorway outside of a typical work venue for transgender sex workers in Beijing. Asia Catalyst photo.

# Documenting Police Practices in China



Bryon Lippincott photo / Flickr. Beijing, 2014

## Uncovering community needs

Through formal research with marginalized groups in 2013 and 2014, Asia Catalyst discovered that police in China often use **the possession of condoms as evidence of prostitution and grounds for arrest** of sex workers. This practice reduces sex workers' willingness and ability to carry and use condoms for commercial sexual transactions, increasing their vulnerability to HIV. A much-publicized government crackdown on sex work in 2014, further emphasized the importance of securing a policy change on condom possession to maximize the effectiveness of China's HIV prevention program. Asia Catalyst also recognized that such a change would be impossible without civil society involvement.

## Launching human rights documentation

In 2015, Asia Catalyst worked with **four community-based organizations** who have been engaged for many years on HIV prevention work, mainly focused on male, female, and transgender sex workers in **three major Chinese cities**. The groups identified ending the police practice of using possession of condoms as evidence of prostitution and grounds for arrest as their top advocacy priority.

As a result of a one year Asia Catalyst human rights documentation and advocacy capacity building program, the four groups were able to conduct **609 interviews with female, male, and transgender sex workers**, CBOs, staff of local health authorities, sex work venue owners, and police officers to document the impact of police practices on HIV prevention strategies in China.



The possession of condoms is often used as evidence of sex work in China. Asia Catalyst photo, 2015.

## THE RESEARCH FOUND:

- (1) Widespread and high incidence contact between sex workers and police, often involving **abuse, extortion and entrapment**;
- (2) **Decreased use of condoms** by sex workers due to police focus on condom possession as primary evidentiary requirement for arrest;
- (3) A high degree of **conflict** between police and ministry of health policies, which mandate condom distribution and promotion for sex work

## COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS

“ The state allows condoms to be brought into hotels, guest houses and venues where high-risk sex occurs, and I feel that in this respect the state has made progress. So then why do the police still use them [condoms] as evidence of prostitution and solicitation? I feel this runs counter to national policies and really needs to change.”

– Li Huixian, female sex worker

“I work in a Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and I tell venue operators...they have to make condoms available, and they put them out. But the police come and say, ‘Why do you have this kind of thing?’ One time I saw the police make the proprietor quickly gather up all the condoms, saying, ‘Do you have illegal activity going on here?’ Under these conditions, managers don’t dare display condoms. They’re afraid of the police but not of the CDC.”

– Zhao Ke, a health department employee at the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention



## CASE STUDY:

### Community-led advocacy to end gay ‘conversion’ therapy in China.

China dropped homosexuality as a psychiatric disorder in 2001. Although the general public has become more accepting of homosexuality in recent years, many families, institutions and even educational textbooks still treat it as a problem that needs to be fixed.

In this climate, controversial “conversion” methods that promise to “cure” gay and lesbian people have become commonplace. The clinics, which are often unlicensed and staffed by uncertified professionals, have been recorded using outlandish, alarming techniques—including electroshock therapy—to “convert” LGBT persons and eradicate homosexuality. These methods, of course, have no basis in medical science, and medical experts warn that the procedures are likely to do more harm than good.

**Armed with a comprehensive advocacy strategy, Asia Catalyst partners took on this fight, with compounding, compelling results.**



Asia Catalyst photo,  
December 2014.

The Beijing LGBT Center is a community-based organization that was founded in 2008 to foster an inclusive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in Beijing. In 2010, The Center launched a psychological counseling center **to meet the needs of LGBT people** in Beijing, many of whom reported being turned away from such treatment at general healthcare facilities. As the CBO matured, The Beijing LGBT Center received an influx of LGBT people seeking **counseling for emotional and physical trauma experienced during gay “conversion” therapy.** This internationally condemned practice subjects LGBT people,

often under pressure from their families, to dangerous and painful therapy aimed at “curing” homosexuality. Homosexuality has not been classified as an illness in China since 2001.

In 2012, the CBO approached Asia Catalyst for **Tailored Coaching**. Over the course of 4 months, Asia Catalyst trained The Beijing LGBT Center to develop and implement effective and strategic evidence-based human rights advocacy. According to Iron, the Director of The Beijing LGBT Center, “*this Asia Catalyst training series laid the groundwork for our subsequent, successful, advocacy programs.*”

## Newsweek

TECH &amp; SCIENCE

### **Gay Conversion Therapy Lives On in China**

BY BILL POWELL / SEPTEMBER 17, 2014 6:53 AM EDT



**“This Asia Catalyst training series laid the groundwork for our subsequent, successful, advocacy programs.”**

- Iron, Director of the Beijing LGBT Center

Iron, the Director of the Beijing LGBT Center, participates in an Asia Catalyst human rights training workshop. Asia Catalyst photo, 2013.

After completing the Tailored Coaching, The Beijing LGBT Center began its advocacy campaign by starting to raise the profile of the harmful effects of “conversion” therapy in China, mainly at academic conferences.

In 2013, The Beijing LGBT Center enrolled in Asia Catalyst’s **CBO Catalyst** program. Over the course of the yearlong collaborative training program, The Beijing LGBT Center forged **a coalition with diverse CBOs from around China**, who were participating in the program, including Yirenping—a CBO serving people living with HIV, Hepatitis, and disabilities in Beijing—and PFLAG—an LGBT CBO from the Southern Chinese city of Guangzhou. Asia Catalyst facilitated peer-to-peer collaboration by building shared space for the activists in a secure environment outside of China. Over the course of the training, **the CBOs discovered that each of their communities were uniquely affected by the issue of gay “conversion” therapy.** Subsequently, they developed a **joint human rights advocacy strategy** aimed at ending “conversion” therapy across China.

First, to create an evidence base on the issue, The Beijing LGBT Center and its partners worked with activists around the country to **document the existence of “conversion” therapy in 10 Chinese cities**. They found that conversion therapy was happening nation-wide, and it often included harmful practices such as electro-shock therapy. To disseminate this data, The Beijing LGBT Center published **a groundbreaking report on LGBT psychological health in China**. The report included extensive desk research, international case studies, and policy recommendations, as well as the findings from their detailed field research.



### 2015, Al Jazeera Media Network

A Man Fights Gay Conversion Clinics In China



As a part of the joint advocacy plan launched by the Beijing LGBT Center, Iron and Yang Teng launched media campaigns to educate the Chinese public on the dangers of gay “conversion therapy.” Screenshot: Al Jazeera Media Network, June 2015.

In winter 2014, the CBOs then invited representatives of 20 organizations from around China to participate in **a workshop on collaborative advocacy to end the pathologization of homosexuality in China**. Together, the diverse representation of CBOs from across China crafted **a joint three-year advocacy strategy** to end discrimination against LGBT communities around the country.

As a part of this strategy, The Beijing LGBT Center worked with a gay man, called Yang Teng, who had undergone “conversion” therapy in the southwestern city of Chongqing. Yang Teng had suffered emotional and physical trauma as a result of his

“conversion” therapy. With support from The Beijing LGBT Center, Yang Teng filed China’s **first ever lawsuit against a gay “conversion” therapy clinic**.

**In summer 2014, the lawsuit became the first of its kind accepted in a Chinese court.**



This was a major victory for China's LGBT community.

**According to Iron, "It's really a milestone. And Yang Teng will be recorded in history. This is the first time LGBT people initiated this sort of litigation, so it's very inspirational for the LGBT community."**



**D**uring the litigation, The Beijing LGBT Center and partners in Beijing conducted a **public advocacy campaign** to fuel public outrage and awareness. The activists protested and held performances outside of the courthouse, dressing up as faux doctors and nurses administering chilling "conversion" therapy techniques to patients.

The court announced its verdict on December 18, 2014.

**The court ruled that "conversion" therapy was unnecessary and reaffirmed that homosexuality is not an illness; accordingly it does not require treatment.**

The court also ordered the clinic that "treated" Yang Teng to **publicly apologize** and provide him with **compensation**. The court also ordered **Baidu**, the popular Chinese search engine, to stop posting advertisements for the clinic.

Just over one year into their three-year advocacy plan, The Beijing LGBT Center and partners from across China are not slowing down. In 2015, the campaign garnered remarkably high levels of international media coverage on the issue of gay "conversion" therapy. Multiple documentaries aired on the campaign internationally, including a **November 2015 exclusive story on the UK television program Unreported World**.

The Beijing LGBT Center's definitive goal is to end discrimination against LGBT people in China. To do this, the root cause of people's discriminatory attitudes must be uncovered. Thus, The Beijing LGBT Center is also currently **conducting a survey** of psychological counselors' and mental health professionals' attitudes towards homosexuality across China; thousands of people have already responded. As their advocacy campaign continues to gain momentum in China, the organization will set its sights regionally.

**According to Iron, "through collaboration with experts in this field, we can gradually eliminate discrimination against homosexual people in the Asia region. That is the ultimate goal."**

## THE WALL STREET JOURNAL. CHINA

### Chinese Court Rules Against Clinic in Country's First 'Gay Conversion' Case

ARTICLE

COMMENTS (22)

BEIJING CHONGMING HOMOSEXUALITY HUMAN RIGHTS

[Email](#)[Print](#)

Yang Teng awaits the verdict of his landmark lawsuit outside of the Beijing courthouse. Photo: AP.

Unreported World

China's Gay Shock Therapy

How some Chinese hospitals use drugs and electric shock therapy to 'cure' gay people

Fri 9 Oct, 7.30pm Duration 24:26

In October 2015, the UK television program Unreported World produced a video on the situation of gay "conversion" therapy in China. The video featured the continuing advocacy campaign of The Beijing LGBT Center and its partners in China. Photo: Unreported World, 2015.

## WE PRIORITIZE THE SUCCESS OF OUR PARTNERS IN ASIA

Since 2006, Asia Catalyst has directly increased the capacity of over 200 community based organizations (CBOs) from 11 countries. These Asia Catalyst partners represent

thousands of marginalized communities across Asia, including people living with HIV and Hepatitis B and C, LGBT people, sex workers, people who use drugs, people living with disabilities, and people living with rare diseases.

In 2015, our **22 CBO partners in capacity building programs directly represent and**

**serve 43,849 marginalized persons in Cambodia, China, Myanmar, and Viet Nam.** These beneficiaries include LGBT people, sex workers, people living with HIV, people living with disabilities, and women and youth.

Graduates of Asia Catalyst programs go on to generate change at the local, national, and regional levels. This year, Asia Catalyst saw

our partners across Asia achieve noteworthy success in human rights advocacy and in organizational management and sustainability.

**Alongside rigorous monitoring and evaluation of our work, we believe our partners are best positioned to articulate Asia Catalyst's impact.**



An LBT CBO leader from China gives a presentation on community needs at a CBO Catalyst workshop. Asia Catalyst photo, April 2015.

# COMMUNITY-FOCUSED RESULTS

"In Cambodia, Asia Catalyst is helping us build the capacity of our members of **women living with HIV** to understand human rights, gender-based violence, and HIV-transmission modes. We are working to identify what issues women living with HIV face in the community, and how to solve them. It is important to build their knowledge with Asia Catalyst's training. Because, sometimes stigma and discrimination happens because people do not understand how HIV can be spread, and what human rights all people—even those with HIV—share.

One of the issues that we face are the number of competing priorities in our country. If a community is worried about having enough food to eat, how can we most effectively get them to care about the discrimination and violence faced by the women living with HIV among them? **Asia Catalyst's context analysis exercise taught us how to think critically and strategically about these realities.**"

- The Cambodia Community of Women Living with HIV  
Regional Rights Training participants, 2015



**"Asia Catalyst's CBO Catalyst workshop series has been one of the most valuable trainings I've had. I realized the importance of advocacy and, for the first time, our organization decided to do advocacy—previously we only did service provision.**

**We can now use Asia Catalyst's sub-grant to implement advocacy activities. Since participating in the training, I have also been promoting democratic values in our organization."**

- Mao Mao Yu, Anhui Hefei Youth Health Service Center  
CBO Catalyst participant, 2015



**"We really like Asia Catalyst's training methodology and curriculum. We have participated in different trainings, but most of the time we don't have any chance to ask questions... but for Asia Catalyst's coaching, we just stopped and discussed any questions that arose."**

**- Baishui Zhu Can, a Chinese CBO, on Asia Catalyst's Tailored Coaching program**





## Leadership

### **Charmain Mohamed | Executive Director**

Charmain is a respected and experienced human rights advocate and activist, who has lived and worked in Asia for most of the past 15 years. She has worked for the UN, Human Rights Watch and the Norwegian Refugee Council, both in emergency contexts and on long-term issues, in countries such as Indonesia, East Timor, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and, most recently in Palestine. She holds a Masters in Human Rights Law from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and a BA (Hons.) in Southeast Asian Studies and Indonesian Language from the University of Hull. Charmain is fluent in English, Indonesian and Malay.

### **Shen Tingting | Director of Advocacy, Research and Policy**

Shen Tingting has been a prominent HIV/AIDS and human rights advocate in Beijing, China, and has been working with marginalized communities since her college days. In 2007, Tingting co-founded the Korekata AIDS Law Center with Li Dan, and until 2012 she was the deputy director of its parent organization, Dongjen Center for Human Rights Education and Action, where she founded and managed an outreach program for sex workers in Beijing. Tingting received her MA in Social Welfare from Renmin University of China in 2009, and served as a visiting research fellow at Asia Catalyst from March -August 2012.

### **Gisa Dang | Director of Capacity Building and Community Initiatives**

Gisa Dang is responsible for developing and implementing the strategic direction of the Capacity Building and Community Initiatives program. Gisa has created and conducted dozens of customized workshops for grassroots NGOs in organizational management and advocacy skills. She has led ongoing coaching of the groups we've trained to ensure integration of fundamental skills into organizational processes. Since joining Asia Catalyst in 2009, Gisa has spoken at top global events such as the International AIDS Conferences in Vienna and Washington DC, and the International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific in Bali and Busan. Gisa holds an MA in Sinology and Political Science from University of Cologne, Germany and is fluent in German, Chinese, and English.

### **Brian Bonci | Director of Finance and Operations**

Brian joined Asia Catalyst in 2011. He received his BA in Political Science and Women's and Gender Studies from Pace University, where he was a Jeannette K. Watson Fellow. Brian previously worked on political campaigns and volunteered with LGBT and HIV/AIDS advocacy organizations in New York City and Cape Town, South Africa. He has also advised international exchange students in Tunisia and taught English in Central America. Brian is fluent in English and Spanish.

## Our Board

### **Yvonne Y.F. Chan,**

CHAIR & TREASURER

Paul Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP

### **Bruce Rabb,**

Legal Advisor

### **Carolyn Bartholomew,**

U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission

### **Randall Chamberlain,**

Law Office of Randall Chamberlain, PLLC

### **Sara L.M. Davis,**

NYU Center for Human Rights & Global Justice

### **Andrew Duncan (until Sept 2015),**

Independent Consultant

### **Ann Hotung,**

US Asia Law Institute at NYU Law School

### **Sarah Lubman,**

The Brunswick Group

### **Minky Worden,**

Human Rights Watch

### **Shannon Wu,**

Independent Consultant

### **Tina Zonars,**

Christie's

### **EMERITUS MEMBERS**

### **Jerome A. Cohen,**

NYU School of Law

### **Sophie Richardson,**

Human Rights Watch



## Thank you, donors and friends

Asia Catalyst understands the importance of value for money. We run all of our programs—with offices in Beijing, Bangkok, and New York—with 11 dedicated members of staff. We have a significant impact with limited resources. We see progress every day.

But we can't do it alone. Asia Catalyst relies on the support of passionate and thoughtful friends to deliver help where it is needed most. Across, please find a list of our valued supporters for 2015.

All financial reporting in this annual report corresponds to Asia Catalyst's fiscal year: July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.



Following Giten Khwairakpam's presentation on Hepatitis C, CBO Catalyst participants practiced giving their own presentations on Hepatitis C. Within a week of the workshop, one participant was requested by their local health department to assist a local person living with Hepatitis C, and successfully secured medicine, saving the community member US \$2000. Asia Catalyst photo, 2015.

## WHERE THE MONEY CAME FROM

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, Asia Catalyst's operating revenues were \$ 740,775. We would like to thank the individual and institutional supporters of our programming. Below follows a list of supporters who have contributed more than US \$50 during fiscal year 2015.

\$50 - \$199	\$200 - 1000	\$1,000 - 4,999	\$5,000 - 9,999	\$10,000 - 50,000	\$100,000 +
Andrea Worden	Andrew Goldberg	Jerome Cohen	Ann M. Hotung	Embassy of France in Beijing	Bess Weatherman & Andrew Duncan
Anonymous	John and Carol Santoleri	Minky Worden	Tina E. Zonars	Open Society Foundations	Ford Foundation
Beatriz Olson	Joseph Saunders	Sarah Lubman & Michael Dardia	New Zealand Embassy Beijing	Shannon Wu	Levi Strauss Foundation
Bonnie Dang	Kelley Eckels-Currie	Winnie Feng		UNAIDS, Bangkok	National Endowment for Democracy
Carol Wang	Meg Davis			UNFPA, Beijing	
Deborah Davis	Neil Binder			Yvonne Chan	
Elizabeth Lynch	Randall Chamberlain				
Helen Ledwith					
Henry Delcore					
James Ross					
Jennifer Salen					
Louisa Greve					
Stacy Mosher					
Susan Hubbard					

### In-kind support

Asia Catalyst would like to thank the following individuals and institutions for donation of services or other support in-kind:

- Members of Asia Catalyst's Board of Directors
- The Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice
- The Law Office of Randall Chamberlain
- Matt Schroeter, designer & photographer
- Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
- TrustLaw, the global pro bono legal programme of the Thomson Reuters Foundation

## WHERE THE MONEY WENT

Asia Catalyst has three significant program expenses: Capacity Building and Community Initiatives in China (CBO Catalyst and Tailored Coaching programs); Capacity Building and Community Initiatives Regional (Regional Rights Training program), and Advocacy, Research and Policy. Asia Catalyst also expends for development, financial accountability, and administration.

**80% of all expenses were spent directly on program activities.**

