

Conclusion

The developing member countries of ADB have much of which to be proud. The development of education has been rapid and widespread. Both quality and access have increased substantially. But success brings new challenges. The challenges facing developing Asia over the next decade include:

- (i) *A new emphasis on quality improvement.* The particular challenge will be to maintain and extend quality at the primary level while expanding access at the secondary level.
- (ii) *Increased pressure for greater efficiency.* This is never ending; each accomplishment will be followed by a renewed call for yet greater efficiency. Nonetheless, it is one of the central concerns of government, and education leaders cannot ignore it.
- (iii) *A continued push toward decentralization.* The central issue will be how to attend to the training needs of the school-level administrators who are increasingly assigned responsibilities for which they are not prepared.
- (iv) *The evolution of a new balance between public and private responsibility for delivery of education.* While the trade-offs between public and private responsibility for education are complicated, fiscal concerns will force even reluctant partners to find new balances between these alternative ways of providing schooling.
- (v) *Teacher unionization.* The converging pressures for greater community financing of schools, more decentralized control of schools, and well-organized teacher union demands for more attention to the quality of teachers' working lives will result in considerable conflict.
- (vi) *The search for effective teacher incentives.* The growing fiscal pressures on many governments in the region heighten interest in low cost, nonmonetary incentives.
- (vii) *The effective use of information systems in decision making.* Many countries are already reaping the rewards of having better information on their education systems to guide their planning and program management. While no longer a new initiative, it remains an important one.
- (viii) *Greater gender diversity* in the leadership of the education system.
- (ix) *Securing and allocating resources.* The economic troubles in Asia during the late 1990s heralded sharper competition among sectors for public moneys. Education managers will come under even greater pressure to develop alternative funding streams from communities and industry. Education managers will need stronger skills to represent their interests in public forums.

The success of the DMCs in meeting the challenges of the last two decades gives much hope as the countries of the region together and separately face the challenges of the next decade.