

## Issues by Level of Education

To this point, the analysis has focused largely on system-wide concerns. This section discusses special issues that affect subsectors of the education system. Administrators at different levels of the education system may not be natural enemies, but they are not necessarily allies either. The issues faced by those representing different levels of the education system are different from each other and different from the past. Education managers not only have to be able to work effectively with teachers and communities, they have to work effectively with those managing other parts of the education enterprise.

### Primary Education

- (i) The substantial gains in expanded primary education enrollments already achieved in East Asia will also occur in South Asia (ADB 1997).
- (ii) The changing demographics will put new pressures on the education system. As fewer people are working in agriculture and more seek employment in urban areas and in industrial and service sectors, in which literacy and numeracy play a more important part, their need for literacy and numeracy skills will increase.
- (iii) As a result of the near universalization of primary education in many parts of Asia, national education goals are already shifting from emphasis on access and continued expansion to quality improvement. *This will change the day-to-day work of education managers, particularly those at the school level.* The emphasis over the next decade will be to work with the existing teaching force to institute new methods and pedagogical practices in the classroom. Right now, head teachers are poorly equipped to do this.
- (iv) Greater decentralization will place demands on school head teachers that many will be unable to meet. Head teachers in DMCs typically have little or no formal preparation to understand the trade-offs (in terms of learning outcomes) associated with the resource allocation decisions that many are being asked to make. Nor do they necessarily have the political skills needed to build the community participation and support that decentralization is supposed to foster.
- (v) DMCs' efforts to reduce the size of their bureaucracies may reduce the number of opportunities for managers to move up the administrative pyramid. The leveling-off of demand in some countries will reduce the number of opportunities for teachers to move into school administration. The convergence of these two trends may contribute to "administrator stagnation" as opportunities for promotion within the system are relatively few.

## Secondary Education

- (i) The success in achieving high rates of primary education will fuel a corresponding government-led expansion of secondary education (ADB 1996). *One potential implication is a reallocation of resources to accommodate this surge.* Primary education, which has been the centerpiece of considerable government support and international assistance, will see its resource base level off as the focus of capital and recurrent expenditures shifts to the next level up the system.
- (ii) As secondary education becomes the sector of rapid growth, there will be a new window of demand for administrators at this level. Ministries need to develop clear criteria for the selection of these administrators, lest those positions go to candidates with the greatest seniority in the system rather than those best qualified. Preparation needs to start now to ensure an adequate supply of well-trained administrators over the next decade.

## Vocational/Technical Education

- (i) Vocational training has most often been used to reduce enrollment pressures on academic secondary school tracks. It has been widely regarded as a low-cost alternative for weaker students, and has not necessarily prepared students for the skill demands of modern sector work. International evidence points to weak alignment of skill preparation with labor market needs, limited effectiveness of training, and high costs. The time spent on vocational and technical education is sometimes criticized for diverting time from language and computational skill development that might position graduates better for employment in the modern sector (ADB 1995a; Chapman and Windham 1985).
- (ii) One reason for low quality in vocational/technical instruction is that skilled staff can command higher prices in the private sector. For example, in the early 1990s, only 3 percent of the top vocational/technical teachers in the Philippines had the required industrial training or experience, and most of those recruited by the Bureau of Technical/Vocational Education stayed for only a year or two. The turnover was attributed to the higher salaries, better incentives, and better working conditions in private companies (Philippines 1992).

## Higher Education

- (i) Four higher education management issues will command special attention over the next decade: (a) development of new/alternative funding streams; (b) student transfer and the transfer of credits across institutions; (c) formulation and imposition of standards, and the implementation of accreditation systems; and (d) capturing creative talent of faculty to create an income stream for the institution (as opposed to faculty consulting privately).

- (ii) Access to higher education in some DMCs favors children from upper and upper-middle class families. As more students complete secondary education, there will be increasing pressure for improved equity in student access to higher education, particularly for children from low-income families and ethnic minorities.
- (iii) In parts of East Asia, 50 to 60 percent of higher education expenses are privately funded. In Asia overall, about 33 percent are privately funded. Governments will need to allow and encourage the development of private higher education. One reason is that the unit costs of privately funded higher education are considerably lower than the unit costs of publicly funded institutions (Mingat 1996).
- (iv) The increased pressure for private financing of higher education can be expected to spark conflict with citizens who have come to view free (or low cost) public higher education as an entitlement.
- (v) Historically, low faculty salaries in many DMCs were offset by the expectation that faculty would generate additional incomes through personal consulting. The university became a platform for individual entrepreneurial activity. Teaching loads were light as faculty sought their main incomes elsewhere. One consequence was higher faculty/student ratios than would seem necessary. As institutions have come under pressure to generate more of their own revenues, some are looking for ways to recapture this talent and convert it into income for the institutions. This encounters three types of resistance: (a) lack of infrastructure for handling external funds in an accountable manner, (b) a lack of clients willing to trust the institution to conduct their work in a diligent and timely way, and (c) resistance from faculty who see it as a tax on their consulting incomes. Future financial viability of some institutions may require that proper procedures, public confidence, and faculty participation in institution-based research and development activities be established.