

Foreword

As reflected in the development plans of developing member countries (DMCs) of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), building adequate infrastructure to maintain economic growth and poverty reduction is a priority in the Asia and Pacific region. Further, the operating efficiency and quality of infrastructure services need improvement, and infrastructure financing options need to be expanded. To improve and expand infrastructure, during the last few decades, several developing countries in the region undertook significant reforms in infrastructure sectors. However, infrastructure development in most countries in the region still lags behind world standards in both quantity and quality.

Infrastructure is an area in which ADB has a comparative advantage. DMC feedback through formal and informal consultations shows high demand for ADB assistance for infrastructure. In response to the demands of its clients, ADB has reiterated its broad focus on infrastructure in the Medium-Term Strategy II, adopted in 2006. Further, ADB has been adjusting and expanding its instruments and assistance modalities in response to the rapidly changing economic landscape of this dynamic region.

The developments just noted provided the motivation for this study. The study provides an overview of general trends in ADB's infrastructure operations, keeping in view the pattern of infrastructure growth and continuing technological and economic

issues in the region. The first five sections of the study focus on infrastructure development in the region, which provide the background for describing and analyzing in the remaining sections some general trends in ADB's infrastructure operation. The document also covers other selected issues including social and environmental sustainability, inclusiveness, good governance and participation in infrastructure. The study is based on analysis of available information and compiles some relevant infrastructure statistics in one place.

The document is largely meant as a general reference material for the internal ADB audience, but is also suitable for external consumption in the context of ADB operations. We hope that this study will provide useful material for and spur further thinking and discussion on the development of infrastructure, including appropriate policies and practices.

We greatly value and appreciate the support provided by infrastructure sector divisions of operations departments, related communities of practice and staff of the Regional and Sustainable Development Department (RSDD), particularly, Shyam Bajpai and WooChong Um. The inputs provided by Ajay Guha, Toru Kubo, Eunkyung Kwon, James Leather, Wouter Lincklaen Arriens, K.E. Seetharam, Samuel Tumiwa; and data and research assistance provided by Georginia Nepomuceno and Araceli Knaik, are appreciated.

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