

# FOREWORD

In 2002, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) undertook to provide technical assistance to institutions dedicated to educating and training citizens of the Asia and Pacific region in public administration. From the start, it was hoped that they would form an association to encourage the sharing of expertise and good practice, assist one another in the continuing development of public administration theory and practice through research and other initiatives, and foster cooperation and collaboration between and among the members in the pursuit of related and common interests.

The Asian crisis of 1997 had showed us the degree to which this region is vulnerable in its march toward economic growth and development; lack of good public management and related training was thought to have played some role. Strengthening the public service in Asia and the Pacific is key to the region's growth because as countries move towards more liberalized economies, the regulatory function of government becomes more important to their success.

In the different subregions of Asia, we find countries with many similarities, both historic and systemic. For example, Central Asian republics share degrees of linguistic and religious commonality and are characterized often by their Soviet past and overcentralized systems, which continue to hamper their transition to market economies. The countries of the Mekong region are experimenting with mixed political systems that keep political control within the state apparatus while bringing in market elements. In South Asia, extensive moves are afoot to open economies further, in pace with emerging economies in East and Southeast Asia such as Malaysia and Thailand. In each subregion, the similarities militate for some degree of regional cooperation in public administration education in order to capitalize on regionally available capacity and respond to market efficiency. Project-based capacity development should be complemented with the building of indigenous governance/public administration advisory capacity to encourage local and regional solutions to the major deficiencies of public administration in Asia and the Pacific. An educational network can help greatly in achieving these goals.

As part of its mandated role to catalyze greater regional cooperation and the exchange of good practices for development, ADB foresaw a network to address the knowledge management and regional cooperation gap among its developing member countries. Underlying this initiative was the belief

that schools and institutes of public administration in Asia and the Pacific are potentially powerful advisory resources that can strengthen governance and public management. These institutes have the advantage of being locally sustainable and becoming powerful institutional change agents based on their local knowledge, acceptability, and influence.

The experiences of thriving networks in other regions show clearly that part of their accomplishment has been the improvement in the quality of governance through their capacity-building initiatives and their promotion of the highest standards of professional practice in government policy making and administration. Such networks also provide an important means of sharing information about best practices not only in the education and training of government officials, but also about effective government policy and management itself.

Thus, beginning in 2003, ADB has supported the establishment of the *Network of Asia-Pacific Schools and Institutes of Public Administration and Governance (NAPSIPAG)*. NAPSIPAG aspires to be a leading regional cooperation arrangement in Asia and the Pacific that is able to develop strong and capable leaders in public service who can initiate and manage modernization in their respective countries in partnership with the various stakeholders of governance. The December 2004 Conference on which this book is based, which brought together more than 200 participants from government and higher learning institutions representing 26 countries, constituted its launch.

The Conference had three objectives. The first was to put the Network, i.e., NAPSIPAG, in place. The second was to ensure that public administration and policy educators and practitioners of the region could share their experiences. The third concerned learning from innovations in poverty alleviation and good governance that could be used to promote development in general and improve outcomes for the poor in particular.

By the end of the conference, the seeds for NAPSIPAG were planted, an Interim Steering Committee was chosen from among participants to advance it, and the first objective was met.

NAPSIPAG will depend on the sharing of expertise among individuals and institutions across countries and regions, in the hope of making significant contributions to the reform process while honing the capacity of current and would-be leaders. The globalization era, technological revolution, the emerging philosophy of development, all have brought about changes in the role of civil servants. As a result, the demand for skill and competency training programs for those who are destined to become leaders in their several fields is greater than ever; if this demand is not met, civil services in developing countries all over Asia and the Pacific will fall farther

and farther behind. Training institutions are striving to provide the kind of training and education that meets and at the same time anticipates the new challenges being faced by public servants.


To meet the needs of educators and set the tone for cooperation among participating institutions, thus satisfying the NAPSIPAG launching conference's second objective, one workshop session was devoted to the "teaching of public administration and policy." It was felt useful to have a discussion on pedagogy of the public administration discipline with specific reference to Asia and selected papers appear in the book. To meet the third objective, it was decided to take a critical look at the crucial role public administration plays in poverty alleviation through improved governance, and this subject was treated through five workshops.

This book is a compendium of selected presentations representing the six workshops around which the NAPSIPAG launching conference was organized. It is always difficult to choose the most appropriate papers for publication and errors can be made. However, we believe the articles in this book taken together give a flavor of the preoccupations of scholars, public servants, researchers, and students of public administration in the Asia and Pacific region at this time.

Organizing such a conference, bringing people from a wide geography together, and ensuring that they bond around common objectives is never easy. It is important to take this occasion to recognize those who helped us achieve our objectives. The International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration and its former president, Mr. Allan Rosenbaum; the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration of Central and Eastern Europe and its Executive Director, Ludmila Gajdosova; the Korean Institute of Public Administration and its former director, Yun-Won Hwang; members of the China National School of Administration (CNSA) and especially its Vice President, Yuan Shuhong; the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and Prof. Jeff Straussman, who is the head of its International Education Committee were all instrumental in helping us advance the concept of NAPSIPAG. Additionally and importantly, our very sincere thanks go to senior administrators of Malaysia's National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN), Dr. Zulkurnain Haji Awang, its former director, who had the foresight to see the importance of the Network and extend an invitation to all to come to Malaysia; and the current Director, Dr. Hj. Malek Shah bin Hj. Mohd Yusoff, whose understanding and generosity has ensured that we could hold the conference under ideal conditions. Assistance in the organization of the Conference, in launching NAPSIPAG and in the preparation of this publication by Eden Valmonte-Santiago, Consultant

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