

FOREWORD

Municipal managers in Asian cities today are faced with the formidable challenge of finding effective and innovative ways of dealing with rapid urbanization, growing demand for improved public services, and declining financial support from central governments. Moreover, in developing countries in Asia, the infrastructure requirements of the urban sector are so large that the multilateral development banks and other donors can at best contribute only a small fraction of the total. However, there is a solution to this apparent dilemma. Because economic activity and wealth in these countries will be largely generated by the expanding cities, the resources needed for municipal infrastructure development will be available. Tapping these resources, however, will require significant improvement in the management of the cities.

Toward this end, and in recognition of the important roles that municipalities will play in the areas of economic growth, human development, and environmental management, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has identified improvement in management and public service delivery at the municipal level as a priority area in its governance agenda.

Since 1997, ADB and the ADB Institute have been organizing workshops aimed at creating awareness of recent developments in public-sector management at the local government level. Participants share experiences of successes in reforming municipalities and in motivating citizens and municipal managers to embrace change.

Three workshops were held between October 1997 and March 1998. Two were organized under the ADB's regional technical assistance on governance and development, which facilitated citizen initiatives to promote municipal government reforms in Lahore, Pakistan, and Dhaka, Bangladesh, respectively. The third was the ADBI-sponsored Municipal Management Forum in Tokyo, Japan.

The proceedings of these three workshops were published in 1999 as Volumes I-III in the series on *Asian Cities in the 21st Century: Contemporary Approaches to Municipal Management*.

- Volume I, *Leadership and Change in City Management*, discusses concepts such as leadership, vision, mission, planning, and customer focus to which participants of the Tokyo forum were exposed. It also provides examples of the application of these concepts by municipalities in tackling their problems and implementing change programs.
- Volume II, *Municipal Management Issues in South Asia*, discusses issues in selected South Asian cities, with a special emphasis on organizational problems in Lahore. It also provides a review of municipal reforms and urban governance issues in India and Sri Lanka.
- Volume III, *Reforming Dhaka City Management*, discusses institutional issues, financial management, and solid waste management in Dhaka and provides recommendations on organizational reforms to deal with these issues.

Subsequently, two Asian Mayors' Forums have been held. The first was in Cebu, Philippines, December 1998, co-sponsored by ADB, ADBI, and the City Government of Cebu. The second, the proceedings of which are being published as Volume IV, was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, June 1999, and was co-sponsored by ADB, ADBI, Colombo Plan Secretariat, USAID Regional Urban Development Office for South Asia, US-Asia Environmental Partnership Program, UNDP/ UNCHS Urban Management Program, Konrad Adenauer Foundation, German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), and, of course, the Colombo Municipal Council.

Volume IV contains the experiences of municipal leaders from a number of Asian cities and representatives of development agencies in improving governance and delivery of municipal services, particularly through partnerships with the private sector and nongovernment organizations.

The Forum was also a venue for presentation and discussion of the experiences to date of ADB's Benchmarking Project, a pilot project aimed at testing the techniques of benchmarking and continuous improvement to enhance the delivery of municipal services in selected Asian cities.

We are grateful for the invaluable contributions of the participants and resource persons at this Forum. Penelope Price coordinated the Forum. Michiko Yoshida assisted in its organization. The Colombo Municipal Council Team, headed by His Worship Omar Kamil and Dr. Fahmy Ismail, hosted the Forum and ensured that all the participants received the best hospitality. Rose Belen transcribed the proceedings. Jay Maclean provided editing services, and Ramiro Cabrera did the cover design.

We trust that this series will make a positive contribution to the literature on municipal management. Further, we hope it will prove to be a

useful resource for city managers in their efforts to improve the quality of life of their citizens, and thus promote the development of responsive and effective local government.

Masaru Yoshitomi
Dean, Asian Development Bank Institute

Shoji Nishimoto
Director, Strategy and Policy Department
Asian Development Bank