

# Acknowledgments

This paper was prepared by Kowsar P. Chowdhury of the Pacific Department of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) under the overall guidance and direction of Robert Y. Siy, Jr., Peter N. King, and Indu Bhushan. Adriaan Verspoor provided valuable assistance with the final draft. Grace Mak was involved at an earlier stage. The paper draws on extensive analytical work done both within and outside ADB.

We gratefully acknowledge the many thoughtful discussions with various public and private agencies and individuals from Pacific developing member countries. These included government officials, public and private schools and colleges, nongovernment organizations, and church groups in the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. The important information and deep insights we gained from them, together with their thoughtful comments on the final draft, have proven invaluable.

We thank our development partners for their extensive comments and the information they generously provided, especially the Australian Agency for International Development and the New Zealand Agency for International Development, as well as those working with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and the Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of Basic Education.

Constructive feedback from colleagues in ADB was very useful and helped shape the paper during its final stages of preparation. Special thanks go to Judy Goldman for editing and editorial advice; Ophie Iriberry for proofreading; Anna Melissa Dayrit for preparing annexes, graphs, and references; Cecile Sarfati for web posting, and Gladdys Santos-Nave for overall administrative assistance.

Finally, we thank the Office of External Relations at ADB for making the artwork from *If I Had the Chance: Artwork from the Streets of Asia and the Pacific* available for this publication. We are especially

grateful to the child artists from Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea whose artworks appear on these pages. We are happy that these children have another chance to share their dreams with those who can help ensure those dreams are realized.

# Foreword

Progress in education has been remarkable in almost all countries of the Pacific in the last few decades, yet daunting challenges remain. While there has been tremendous success in ensuring access to basic education, the results have not been equally distributed within and across countries. Wide variations exist in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. Even in countries where access to basic education is no longer an issue, quality and equity remain dominant policy concerns. Many students do not acquire the learning skills they need as productive adults in an increasingly competitive world. Children of poor parents, especially those living in rural areas, often remain deprived of an equal opportunity to learn and thus of the prospect of a better future.

Basic education remains a necessary first step in this process. Countries also need to build on this foundation to provide opportunities for further education and training to youth and adults who have already entered the workforce. This strategy paper suggests actions that can help countries in the region to address these challenges and describes the supporting role the Asian Development Bank (ADB) can play in working with governments and other partners. It presents an operational framework for ADB's overall education strategy for the next five years, based on advice from government officials and colleagues in partner agencies. It is hoped the strategy will provide the basis for discussions among governments, church groups, nongovernment organizations, civil societies, regional organizations, and development partners so as to achieve a shared understanding of the nature of educational challenges and future roles for ADB and others.

ADB is deeply committed to supporting educational development through policy advice, technical assistance, and lending operations in partnership with other agencies wherever possible. In implementing

this strategy, ADB intends to actively explore and promote opportunities to collaborate with regional institutions. Government leadership is, of course, essential for developing a coherent framework for sector development and harmonization of donor procedures and thereby improving the effectiveness of external support to education.



PHILIP PERQUIGA  
Director General  
Pacific Department

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgments</b>	iii
<b>Foreword</b>	v
<b>Abbreviations</b>	xi
<b>Executive Summary</b>	xiii
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	1
Background	1
Purpose and Process of the Strategy Paper	5
<b>Chapter 2: Regional Context: Economic Performance and Challenges</b>	8
Economic Growth and Poverty	8
Development Constraints	11
<b>Chapter 3: Achievements and Challenges in Education and Training</b>	14
Access	15
Quality	18
Internal Efficiency	23
Equity	25
Planning, Management, and Institutional Capacity	27
Financing Education	29
The Challenge of Education Development in Pacific Developing Member Countries	34
<b>Chapter 4: External Assistance to Education</b>	36
ADB's Assistance to Education	36
Education Activities of Other Funding Agencies	38
Public/Private Partnerships	40

<b>Chapter 5: Future Directions for Pacific Education and Training</b>	<b>42</b>
Confronting the Challenge of Equitable Access and Quality	43
Transforming Resources into Results	46
Strengthen Capacity to Manage and Deliver the Education Service	48
Improving Relevance and Responsiveness of Sector Development Processes	53
<b>Chapter 6 Conclusion: The Asian Development Bank's Pacific Education and Training Sector Strategy</b>	<b>55</b>
The Asian Development Bank's Contribution to Education in the Pacific	55
Supporting Education Outcomes for the Poor	56
Strategic Focus	57
Implementing the Strategy	62
Partnership Arrangements	66
Internal Resource Requirements	67
Risks and Monitoring	68
<b>Appendixes</b>	
1. Economic and Social Indicators	70
2. Enrollment and Literacy Rate	72
3. Education Expenditure	75
4. External Assistance to Education	77
5. Proposed ADB Education and Training Sector Activities, 2005–2007	84
6. Sector-Wide Approaches	85
7. The Association for the Development of Education in Africa	87
<b>References</b>	<b>89</b>

---

**List of Boxes**

Box 1	
Millennium Development Goals on Education	2
Box 2	
Education and Poverty Reduction	3
BOX 3	
Samoa: Addressing Access and Quality	43
Box 4	
Strategic Priorities for Education Development that Pacific Developing Member Countries May Want to Consider of Students from the Three Schools at Malifa	45
Box 5	
Restructuring the Education System in Papua New Guinea	49
Box 6	
Information and Communication Technology and Improved Education Outcomes	52
Box 7	
Features of the Sector-Wide Approach	54
Box 8	
Education and Training Sector Strategy for Pacific Developing Member Countries 2005–2009	58

**List of Tables**

Table 1	
Cook Islands, Performance of Grade 4 Students on the Pacific Islands Literacy Level Tests	26
Table 2	
ADB Lending and Technical Assistance Program 2005–2007	64

## Figures

Figure 1 Percentage of Children Who Never Enroll and Who Drop Out by Grade 5 in Selected Pacific Developing Member Countries	24
Figure 2 Primary and Secondary Gross Enrollment Rates by Gross National Income Per Capita in Selected PDMCs	32

# Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
EFA	education for all
EU	European Union
FBEAP	Forum Basic Education Action Plan
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GDP	gross domestic product
GER	gross enrollment rate
GNI	gross national income
ICT	information and communication technology
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NER	net enrollment rate
NGO	nongovernment organization
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
PARD	Pacific Department
PDMC	Pacific developing member country of ADB
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PRIDE	Pacific Regional Initiatives for the Delivery of Basic Education
RMI	Republic of the Marshall Islands
TVET	technical and vocational education and training
SPBEA	South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment
STR	student teacher ratio

SWAp	sector-wide approach
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
US	United States
USP	University of the South Pacific

**Note: In this report, “\$” refers to US dollars.**