

Preface

The Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) is an international non-government organization, formed in December 1960 in the Philippines. The major objective of the organization is to promote economic and social developments of various countries in the Asia and Pacific region. In order to accomplish this goal, the EROPA has maintained three regional centers. They are in New Delhi, Seoul and Tokyo. These centers function as either a training ground or a research hub for the member states of the organization.

The year 2004 marks the forty-fourth year since the inauguration of EROPA. State, group and individual members of this international organization are all extremely proud of the fact that it is the only non-profit and global association devoted to the study of public administration in the Asia and Pacific region. EROPA has been able to continue working as a viable organization essentially because of ever lasting friendship and cooperation among these different members of the organization. Needless to point out, without their support and dedication, EROPA would not have been able to function as a robust and practical association in this region.

Japan is one of the original members of EROPA. In the past, the country has been involved in different EROPA activities mainly through Local Autonomy College (*Jichi Daigakko*). It is the research and training arm of the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs and Postal and Tele-Communications of Japan. Affiliated with EROPA, it houses the EROPA Local Government Center. The center first came into being in October 1964. By keeping close rapport with Local Autonomy College, it has been providing training courses, research activities and publications of different materials on local government and governance relative to EROPA area.

The EROPA Local Government Center has so far published seven monograph series entitled *Comparative Studies of Public Administration*. Each monograph has dealt with a significant theme germane to local government and governance, primarily in the EROPA area. The first volume in 1984 focused on a study of public administration, while the second in 1986 studied professional training of public administrators. The third volume appeared in 1990. It centered on the role of local government in depopulated areas of developing nations. Similarly, the fourth issue in 1992 examined interactions among residents, non-governmental organizations and quasi-public agencies in the Asia-Pacific configuration. The fifth volume was made available in 1994. It analyzed the issue of human resource development in both developed and developing nations. The sixth volume in 1998 considered local government reform from a cross-national perspective. And finally the seventh issue in 2001 devoted to the problem of local governance within the context of national development.

In preparing for the eighth volume, the editorial committee spent a long hours to discuss the central theme. After a lengthy debate, the committee has decided to

comprise the current issue around the problem of public sector reform and governance under the rubric of New Public Management. The theme of the present issue reflects the fact that many various countries in the Asia-Pacific region have initiated various forms and styles of government reform, generally under the expression of New Public Management. In some instances, the attempt has generated important policy changes. In others, NPM has come short of reorienting different policies and programs. Taking these experiences into account, the proposed issue examines the significance of NPM in the Asia-Pacific context.

Each contributor in the current volume explores the effect of NPM reform on specific policies and programs that are of concern to the author. Some papers are country-specific, while others are thematic in content. Comparative studies in this realm may enrich our understanding of both similarities and differences among the states in the area.

On behalf of both Local Autonomy College and EROPA Local Government Center, I hope this volume will help improve our comprehension of the prospect of national and local governance in various countries in the region. I also hope that it will shed an important light on the advancement of quality of government management in the Asia-Pacific region.

In closing, as President of Local Autonomy College and General Director of EROPA Local Government Center, I would like to make two extra notes of appreciation. As in the past, this publication has been made possible by the generous financial assistance from the General Center for Local Autonomy (Jichi Sogo Senta) of Japan. I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Center. Likewise, I would also like to express our special thanks to Professor Akira Nakamura of Dean of the Graduate School of Meiji University, Tokyo. His painstaking efforts in editing the volume have enriched the quality of this volume.

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