

Discussion on “Addressing Social Infrastructure Needs in Asia: Towards a Pandemic Resilient Society”

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* The comments shared here reflect contributions from ADB colleagues including Elisabetta Gentil, Aiko Kikkawa, Minhaj U. Mahmud, and Daniel Suryadarma.

A timely and important knowledge work

- Fill the gap by focusing on social infrastructure of Asia
- Estimate current spending and investment needs through 2030, identifying funding gaps
- Highlight additional needs for strengthening resilience
- Offer a platform for stakeholders to discuss a range of related issues

Housing

- Importance and needs for public housing is highlighted
 - Bears long-term implications on population dynamics, which are difficult to reverse.
- Should government building be included as social infrastructure?
- Demand for senior housing may rise rapidly.

Education

- New demand calls for new or additional infrastructure
 - Free kindergarten (pre-primary) as part of the public education system
 - Facilities to support lifelong learning for adults

Health

- There are huge disparities in health spending across the region. International support is needed to strengthen the ability of governments to fund health infrastructures.
- Motivated and skilled personnel/health workforce is an important aspect of social (health) infrastructure. Sustained investment is need to increase number, quality, and well-being of healthcare professionals

Demographic shifts

- How does the demand projection vary with population size and composition?
- Demographic shifts will significantly impact the utilization rate of social infrastructure.

Closing funding gap

- Policymakers need to be convinced to prioritize social infrastructure?
- Different strategies to close the gap for social infrastructure
- Social infrastructure investment and fiscal responsibility are interconnected.
 - Domestic resource mobilization framework
 - Social protection framework
 - Enhanced supply efficiency

Methodology

- Incorporate quality dimension and personnel needs into the estimate
- Macro versus micro estimations
- Referencing to other methods used in the literature

Thank you!