



# Master of Development Practice

## University of Peradeniya



*"The Master's program in Development Practice is the first of its kind to integrate the four pillars of sustainable development—health science, natural science, social science, and management—and leverage new information communication technologies to promote collaboration across the fading boundaries of national borders. The program's rigorous and comprehensive coursework is complemented by an overarching emphasis on managing for results, including through field assignments to provide students with practical training on the ground. The master's program will empower a new generation of practitioners with the cross-disciplinary training needed to confront the key sustainable development challenges of our time, including extreme poverty, infectious disease, and climate change."*

*-John W. McArthur  
CEO and Executive Director  
Millennium Promise*



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*Today's development challenges need a new type of development professional, trained to bridge the gap between specialised disciplines and to develop integrated policy solutions that are scientifically, politically and contextually grounded.*

## A New Degree and a Global Network

In 2007, a group of 20 leading scholars and practitioners in the field of sustainable development were commissioned to conduct a situation analysis of development educational programmes across the globe.

This International Commission on Education for Sustainable Development Practice, co-chaired by John McArthur, Chief Executive Officer of Millennium Promise, and Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, found that existing development programmes lacked critical linkages between the natural, social and health sciences and management required to address complex development challenges including achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The creation of a Master's degree in Development Practice that would address this gap in current training for development professionals was a key recommendation of the Commission, whose report was published in 2008. <[http://mdp.ei.columbia.edu/sitefiles/file/Final\\_Report\\_2008.pdf](http://mdp.ei.columbia.edu/sitefiles/file/Final_Report_2008.pdf)>

The MacArthur Foundation <[www.macfound.org/mdp](http://www.macfound.org/mdp)> has devoted over \$15 million to implement the recommendations of the commission by developing a global network of over 20 MDP programmes in 15 countries managed by the Global MDP Secretariat at the Earth Institute, Columbia University. <<http://mdp.ei.columbia.edu>>



In October 2009, The University of Peradeniya was among those selected to receive a small grant to create an MDP programme. The first cohort of students of the MDP at Peradeniya is expected to begin the programme in July/August 2011.

Partner Universities in the Global MDP Network include:

BRAC Development Institute, Bangladesh  
CATIE, Costa Rica  
Columbia University, USA  
Emory University, USA  
James Cook University, Australia  
TERI University, India  
Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin, Ireland  
Tsinghua University, China  
Sciences Po, France  
Universidad de los Andes, Columbia  
Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
University of Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal  
University of Botswana, Botswana  
University of California--Berkeley, USA  
University of California—Davis, USA  
University of Denver, USA  
University of Florida, USA  
University of Ibadan, Nigeria  
University of Minnesota, USA  
University of Waterloo, Canada  
University of Winnipeg, Canada

# University of Peradeniya

The University of Peradeniya, established in 1942, is the largest and best-endowed university in Sri Lanka. It has eight faculties (schools) and 72 academic departments, an undergraduate enrolment of approximately 9000 and a postgraduate enrolment of approximately 2000. It has a diverse student body with students representing all geographic regions and ethnic communities of the country, as well as several international students.

The University is the only planned residential university in the country with a residential population of over 5000 students and faculty. It has 15 halls of residence, a health center, places of worship, the celebrated Sarachchandra open air theatre, home to the annual drama festival,

along with activities ranging from sports to culture, with a large number of societies catering to the interests of the different cross sections of the university, making it the most attractive university in the country.

The University's beautiful 700 hectare (1695 acre) campus is located less than 2 minutes from the Peradeniya town, 10 minutes from the Peradeniya Junction Railway station, and 30 minutes from the historic city of Kandy in the Central province of Sri Lanka. It is easily accessible from all major towns in Sri Lanka, and is less than 3 hours away from the capital, Colombo, by road or train.



# The Master of Development Practice (MDP) at University of Peradeniya

Sri Lanka and its neighbours face compelling challenges as they move toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the context of pursuing a sustainable development agenda. These include threats from climate change, vulnerability to natural disasters, rising urbanization, demographic change, persistent and substantial levels of poverty and malnutrition especially in lagging regions and among vulnerable groups. Addressing these complex issues requires generalist development professionals, with training in many areas of core knowledge.

Developed with support from the MacArthur Foundation, the Master of Development Practice (MDP) degree at the University of Peradeniya is a 24 month professional degree program, designed to equip development practitioners to confront complex development challenges. By acquiring interdisciplinary knowledge, practical skills, and an integrated perspective on sustainable development practice, students will prepare to work across different fields to design and manage integrated development interventions and to design appropriate policies to support sustainable development.

The programme features a cross disciplinary curriculum using teaching resources from across the faculties of Arts, Agriculture, Engineering, Science and Medicine of the University of Peradeniya and other Universities and Institutions in Sri Lanka and overseas.

It will focus on the Southern Asian region and emphasize the sustainable development of tropical coastal areas and small islands, preparing for climate change and risk reduction and management of disasters. The programme is designed to welcome students from across the region.

## *Skills and Concepts*

Development Professional Graduates of the MDP Peradeniya will be able to

- undertake projects that require an integrated perspective and effectively lead multidisciplinary teams;
- incorporate knowledge and skills from different disciplines in the design and application of development interventions;
- design, monitor and evaluate projects while paying attention to sustainability, economic, environmental and social aspects;
- use data analysis and spatial analysis tools (e.g GIS, Stata)
- communicate effectively on technical details with experts in many disciplines
- develop integrated policy solutions that are scientifically, politically and contextually grounded



# The Curriculum

The curriculum of Master of Development Practice (MDP) at Peradeniya is designed to help students acquire the interdisciplinary knowledge, practical skills and integrated perspective needed to meet complex development challenges.

**Pre-MDP Intensive Course.** Students follow a required orientation programme of 6 refresher/introductory courses (8 credit equivalents) preceding the MDP.

**Core courses.** Students follow 18 core (compulsory) courses worth 51 credit equivalents over 2 academic years (4 semesters).

**Optional Courses.** Students choose 3 elective (optional) courses worth 9 credit equivalents in the final semester of their programme. These optional courses correspond to student specialisations and include Coastal Zone Management, Climate Change in South Asia, Disaster Management as well as other subjects. Student specialisations will depend on their past training and experience and future career goals.

**Language Courses.** Students are required to follow a 2 credit equivalent introductory course in a local language in which they have little or no fluency.

**Global classroom in Integrated Approaches to Sustainable Development.** Students, scholars and practitioners from over 15 countries participate in this cross-border, cross-disciplinary, interactive web-based course offered by Columbia University, New York, to all MDP programmes across the global network. MDP Peradeniya's offering of this course is enriched by local discussions by area experts.

**Integrated Applied Field Training.** 3 credit equivalents of applied field training incorporating project work or practical training are integrated into compulsory courses, usually in the first semester.

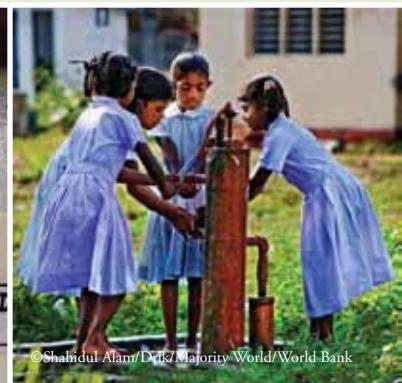
**Internships.** After completing a full academic year, students follow a 3-month internship at a public, private or non-governmental organisation for the opportunity to gain hands-on real world experience in development practice. Internships corresponding to students' interest, training and experience will be arranged at Centre for Poverty Analysis (Poverty and MDGs), Foundation for Environment, Climate and Technology (FECT), Gemidiriya Village Empowerment Programme, Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (Land Settlement Programme), MANDRU (Community Based Sustainable Development Programme), Practical Action (Technology for Development), SLT Manpower Solutions (Sustainable Development in the ICT field), Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka (Climate Change Division), Ministry of Environment, Maldives (Multiple areas).



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## Course Structure

Semester	Courses	Credits*	
YEAR 1	PRE-MDP	Basic Statistics	1
		Basic Mathematics	1
		Principles of Economics	1
		Introduction to Natural Sciences	2
		Colloquial and Communicative Sinhala/Tamil	2
		Professional Writing and Communication Skills	1
	SEMESTER 1	Introduction to Research Methods	1
		Integrated Approaches to Sustainable Development	3
		Community Development and Social Dynamics	3
		Human Impact on the Natural Environment	3
		Energy and Environment	3
YEAR 2	SEMESTER 2	Introduction to Public Health	3
		Geographical Information Systems for Development Practice	3
		Data Analysis for Development Practice	3
		Budget Planning, Financial and Commodities Management	3
		Economic and Policy Analysis	3
		Gender and Human Rights	3
	SEMESTER 3	Principles of Leadership	1
		VACATION	Internship
		Agriculture and Environment	3
		Microeconomics of Development and Policy Analysis	3
YEAR 2	SEMESTER 4 3 elective (optional) courses (3 credits* each)	Equity and Health, Nutrition and Population	3
		Economic and Financial Evaluation of Projects under Certainty and Uncertainty	4
		Planning Urban and Rural Infrastructure	3
		Sustainable Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries	3
		Disaster Management	
		Climate Change in South Asia	
		Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Marine Affairs	
		Environmental Impact Assessment	
		Environmental Economics	
		Contemporary Issues in the Regional and Global Economy	
		Public Economic Policy in Sri Lanka	
		Energy Economics	
		Health Economics	
<b>Total credits*</b>		<b>68</b>	

\*Credit equivalents

# Academic Resources

The University of Peradeniya has a large number of well-trained and motivated academic staff spanning 72 academic departments in 8 faculties (Agriculture, Allied Health Sciences, Arts, Dental, Engineering, Medical, Science, Veterinary Medicine). Several of these academics teach in multidisciplinary programs or work in multidisciplinary research teams. In addition, the University is able to draw on resource persons from other Universities and institutions from within the country, as well as from overseas.

## *Social Sciences*

Academics from the Departments of Economics and Statistics, Geography and Law of the Faculty of Arts, the Centre for Environmental Studies and the Centre for Human Rights team up to provide expertise in the social and economic aspects of development. Coursework features micro and macroeconomic aspects of development, data analysis, community development and social dynamics, environmental economics and environmental impact assessment, gender and human rights, and risk analysis.

## *Management*

Academics from the Departments of Economics and Statistics, English, and Management Studies of the Faculty of Arts and from the Department of Agribusiness in the Faculty of Agriculture provide expert training in communication, finance, geographical information systems, leadership and project evaluation.



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## *Natural Sciences and Engineering*

Academics from the Departments of Geography (Arts), Crop Science, Animal Science (Agriculture), Chemical and Process Engineering and Mechanical Engineering (Engineering) of the University of Peradeniya and the Departments of Civil Engineering of the University of Moratuwa and the Open University of Sri Lanka, and the IRI, Earth Institute, Columbia University, collaborate to provide training in the natural sciences and engineering aspects of development practice.

## *Health Sciences*

Academics from the Departments of Community Medicine and Microbiology of the Universities of Peradeniya and University of Rajarata jointly provide expert training in the Health Sciences, with a social science perspective provided by the Departments of Economics and Statistics.

## *Languages*

Academics from the Departments of Sinhala and Tamil provide introductory language training to non-native speakers of these two languages.

# MDP Partners

MDP students' field training will be hosted by a growing network of MDP partners, including the following institutions:

## *FECT*

[www.climate.lk](http://www.climate.lk)

Foundation for Environment, Climate and Technology is a non-profit that works with partners in government institutions, research institutes and universities to develop usable scientific and technological information that can be applied in diverse sectors. FECT projects are in the areas of water resources, human-elephant conflict, rice, plantations, disaster management, malaria and dengue. FECT will oversee the internship programme of the MDP.

## *Centre for Poverty Analysis*

[www.cepa.lk](http://www.cepa.lk)

CEPA works with local and international NGOs, government and donors, assisting clients to design programmes, prioritise pro-poor interventions, construct monitoring systems, carry out in-process monitoring and independent external evaluations and to develop organisational capacity in project design, monitoring and evaluation relating to resettlement, conflict, infrastructure (roads, energy, water and sanitation), plantations, children's issues and youth.



## *Gemidiriya*

<http://www.gemidiriya.lk>

The Gemidiriya Community Development and Livelihood Improvement Project (GCDLIP) uses a participatory approach and focuses on livelihood improvement and gender empowerment. It works with local community based organisations and local government to develop accountable and self-governing institutions to manage sustainable investments at the village level.

## *Mahaweli Authority*

[www.mahaweli.gov.lk](http://www.mahaweli.gov.lk)

Having administered Sri Lanka's largest integrated rural development multi-purpose river basin programme, the Mahaweli Authority continues to implement development projects in the Mahaweli river basin relating to increasing agricultural production, managing hydro-power, generating employment, resettlement and flood control.

## *Practical Action - South Asia*

[http://www.practicalaction.org.uk/south-asia/region\\_south\\_asia](http://www.practicalaction.org.uk/south-asia/region_south_asia)

Practical Action - South Asia focuses on technology as a tool in poverty reduction and development while having a holistic view on development including the social and economic. Its current projects relate to post-conflict reconstruction, disaster risk reduction, wind, biogas and 'pico' hydro energy projects, adapting agriculture to climate change, and community governance.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## *Who is the MDP programme for?*

Individuals with an interest or background in some aspect of development and who want to be part of a global network of development specialists.

## *What jobs can I do with an MDP?*

MDP graduates will be prepared for employment locally, nationally and globally, in national and international development agencies, non-governmental organisations, research institutes, government departments, financial institutions, private companies, media and civil society.

## *What does it mean that the MDP is part of a global network?*

Students and faculty in participating universities have the opportunity to interact with each other and share learning resources in settings like the web-based global classroom course. In addition Universities within the network may have arrangements for student exchanges for coursework as well as for internships.

## *When does the MDP programme begin?*

The first cohort of MDP students is scheduled to begin their programme in July/August 2011

## *How long is the MDP programme ?*

The Master of Development Practice with 68 credit equivalents of course work is approximately 24 months or 2 academic years, including a 3 month internship.

## *Is there a thesis requirement?*

No. The MDP is a Master's degree by coursework only.

## *Is there an option for a shorter course?*

Yes. Students who register for the MDP and successfully complete 20 credit equivalents from 500 level courses over 1 academic year are eligible for a Diploma in Development Practice.

## *In what language is the programme offered?*

The medium of instruction is English.

## *Do I need to have a specific undergraduate degree?*

No, the MDP is a generalist postgraduate degree suitable for individuals with an undergraduate degree (or equivalent) in social sciences, humanities, management, natural sciences, agriculture, engineering, health sciences, law etc.

## *Any other requirements?*

English language proficiency is a requirement. Experience in the development field is an advantage, though not essential.

## *When are classes held?*

Courses span 15 week semesters, with classes mainly on weekends to accommodate employed professionals.

## *When is the application deadline?*

Application deadlines for postgraduate programmes of the Faculty of Arts are in March/April every year. Updates on application deadlines are available at <http://www.pdn.ac.lk/arts/econ/mdp>

## *What is required in the application?*

Updates on application requirements and details of application procedures are available on the MDP website at <http://www.pdn.ac.lk/arts/econ/mdp>

## *How much does the MDP cost?*

Updates on programme fees and cost information are available on the MDP website at <http://www.pdn.ac.lk/arts/econ/mdp>

## *For more information*

To be placed on a mailing list, email [mdp@pdn.ac.lk](mailto:mdp@pdn.ac.lk)

*“Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.”*

-Nelson Mandela

### *Millennium Development Goals*

- Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty
- Achieve Universal Primary Education
- Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
- Reduce Child Mortality
- Improve Maternal Health
- Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases
- Ensure Environmental Sustainability
- Develop a Global Partnership for Development





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