

**Northwestern Province  
Five -Year Development Plan  
2005 - 2009**

Colombo University Community Extension Center  
University of Colombo - Sri Lanka  
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# **Northwestern Province Five-year Development Plan**

## **Research Team**

Professor Lakshman Dissanayake  
Professor S.M.P. Senanayake  
Mr. N. Selvakkumaran  
Professor Ramanie Jayatilake  
Professor Yoga Rasanayagam  
Professor S.J.B.A. Jayasekara  
Professor Tressie Leitan  
Professor W.M.T.B. Wanninayake  
Rev. Dr. W. Wimalarathana  
Dr. D.A.C. Silva  
Mr. Lasantha Manawadu  
Mr. Nimal Gunatilake  
Ms. Manori Kaluthantiri

**Colombo University Community Extension Centre**  
(Formerly known as UC-JICA Joint Study Project)  
**University of Colombo**  
**Colombo 3**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of this plan is to prepare a user-friendly implementable five year development plan for the Northwestern Province. The plan has identified the relevant sectors of the Northwestern Province and drawn up detailed sectoral plans. The information was gathered from various sources both at local as well as district/provincial/national level. Although sectoral plans are presented separately for the identified sectors, sectoral integration also was done in order to increase the efficacy of the plan and present a comprehensive regional development strategy.

One of the salient features of the plan is the presentation of the projects with their potential and specific locations. In addition, development strategies are also presented to enhance the implementability. The most interesting and also the most important outcome of the plan is the proposal on establishing Focal Development Centres which have never been incorporated in any development plan in this country either at regional or national level. This provides a unique opportunity to develop the province simultaneously through identified strategic locations.

One would notice that the proposal has not provided a comprehensive plan for the total expenditure anticipated due to a number of reasons. The main reason being that in practice, most of the costing done in many plans is not realistic and thus they have never been able to achieve the expected financial targets. Therefore, sectoral financial costing is presented on the basis of the financial plans available for the province. Furthermore the plan envisage that private sector/NGO/foreign donor participation would be elicited on the basis that the public sector will not be able to provide the entirety of the funds needed for the proposed projects/activities.

The economy of the NWP is largely agrarian in nature. with more than 97 percent of the population in the Kurunegala District and about 90 percent in the Puttalam District still living in rural areas. Much of this population is resource poor and is engaged in agricultural pursuits including crop production, livestock rearing and fishing. The development plan for the agriculture sector should therefore focus on increasing growth, efficiency, equity, food security, and sustainability. This may be achieved through efficient and effective resource utilization in line with national and international trends and opportunities for sustainable development of agriculture. To achieve this it is necessary to promote the adoption of improved technology and create linkages with other sectors including land, irrigation, agro-based industries, trade and services in the public and private sectors. Further, it is important to provide appropriate directions towards the mobilization of investments that would utilize the full potential of the agricultural resource base.

It is in this context that proposals are made for the agriculture sector. These proposals focus on increasing productivity of the agricultural, livestock and fisheries sectors in the province while minimizing the outflow of foreign exchange on food imports, on bringing in capital, and management and technological skills and on harnessing the resources of the private sector into agriculture, generating more employment opportunities, earning

more foreign exchange through increased exports and bringing in prosperity to the farming community through increased incomes.

For any governmental programme to be successfully planned and implemented, there must be a government policy which clearly defines the bases upon which the programme is to be planned and implemented. Failure of some developmental programmes in developing countries is usually due to either the absence of governmental policies or lack of well defined policies governing the programmes.

The aquaculture and fishery development programmes are no exception in the shortfalls of policy make up. However the present government high priority was given for development of fisheries and aquaculture resources in the country incorporating their endeavour to support the Fisheries Ministries in the provincial council.

To achieve the five year plan of fisheries and aquatic resources development in NWP, an action plan comprising 19 major projects each of which include several activities has been formulated. The projects cover the following fields in the fisheries sector. Such as aquaculture development, introduction of pearl culture, mollusk culture, ornamental fish and aquatic plant culture/,marine fisheries development/, infrastructure development (harbour, landing site anchorage facilities etc) post harvest technology development with various aspects (dry fish, caned fish, value added products , production of fish sauce etc) community development, research and training, fisheries information centres/,fish marketing development/, protection of fauna and flora and implementation of govt. acts, law and order

It is widely accepted that industrialization provides the gate way to economic advancement. Sri Lanka, unfortunately, has not industrialized adequately to provide such an advantage although reasonable advances have been made in the Western Province. The North Western Province has yet to exploit its industrial potentials to the full.. The proposed plan for industrial development emphasizes community based small scale industrialization with the participation of the public and private sectors. A few industrial parks are also proposed at strategically important locations to facilitate regional development through agglomeration..

Service sector is the largest single sector in the Sri Lankan economy which represents nearly one half of the Gross Domestic product. Tourism is perhaps the most dynamic and resilient service sector in Sri Lanka with wide potentials to expand further and to find remedies for many fundamental economic woes of the country such as unemployment, poverty, low levels of foreign exchange earnings etc. The tourism industry is now basically confined to a few popular destinations, mostly along beaches. There are many other locations with plenty of untapped resources with immense potentials for the development of eco-tourism, particularly in the country side. This plan therefore proposes a range of projects mapping out the relevant strategies to promote the tourism industry in new areas. Attention is paid to social and cultural factors as well as the benefits that trickle down to the local community which has hitherto been overlooked the tourism development programs.



The Five-year Development plan highlights the importance of social development. The plan has attempted to integrate the poor and the socially marginalized groups into main stream economic process, while giving special consideration to special groups such as persons with disabilities, elderly, children, women, female headed households, and internally displaced persons in the province. An attempt is also made to address acute social problems such as alcoholism, drug addiction and violence that have negatively impacted on the province for several years. Thus the concern is on fostering social integration in various ways for the well-being of the people in the province.

Infrastructure facilities form important pre-requisites of regional development. The infrastructure facilities considered in the five year development plan are roads, railways, transport services, post and telecommunications, electricity, drinking water and irrigation. Following the overall objectives of the development plan, detailed proposals have been presented for each of the sectors mentioned above with project details. The action plans have been drawn out to be implemented in tandem with the development plans of the other sectors and the proposed focal development centres (FDC) and satellites

The Project on Institutional Development and Capacity Building examined the Institutional Structure of the North-Western Province, identified constraints/issues pertaining to this structure, and has recommended an activity programme for institutional strengthening.